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MEMOIRS
OF
BERTRAND BARÈRE

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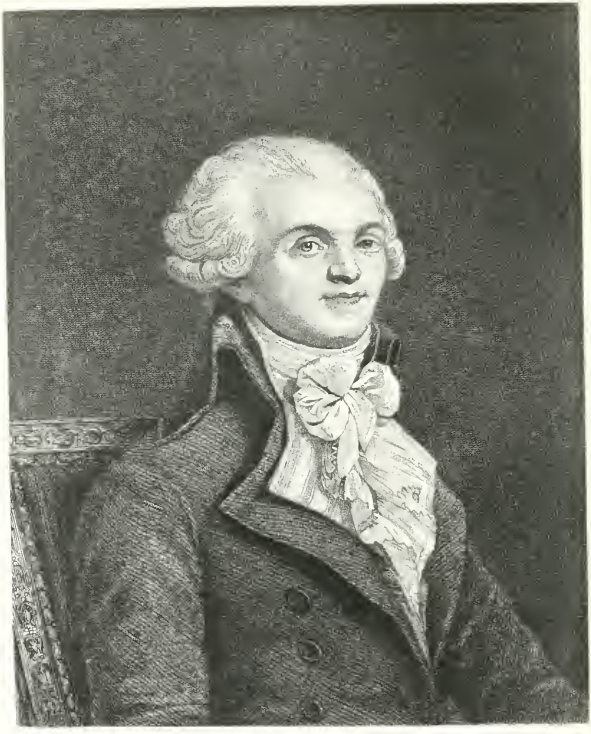

MEMOIRS

OF

BERTRAND BARERE

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY DURING THE REVOLUTION

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED BY

DE V. PAYEN-PAYNE

IN FOUR VOLUMES—VOLUME II

LONDON

H. S. NICHOLS

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MEMOIRS

OF

BERTRAND BARÈRE

The Legislative Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly was succeeded by the Legislative Assembly, composed of new deputies who, taking advantage of the discredit which the Jacobins had cast upon the Constitutional Act after the revision, put forward a few schemes of reformation. These schemes only served to increase the disaffection of the people towards the sole *palladium* of liberty which had been acquired on the 14th of July, 1789.

The Legislative Assembly soon became divided into constitutional royalists and Girondist reformers. This was the cause of those tumultuous sittings, those oaths to the constitution, those hypocrisies for the public welfare and for liberty which were sandwiched between declarations of war against Austria, and the numerous vetoes set by Louis XVI. to the defensive measures of the nation and its liberty.

The catastrophe of the 10th of August caused the overthrow of the national work of the Constituent

Assembly, and suddenly changed the destinies of the French people.

A very remarkable note regarding the preliminaries of the Treaty of Pilnitz, from which it is seen that Leopold, Emperor of Austria, was opposed to making war against France in 1791, that England desired this war, and that she provoked and fomented it.[1]

Leopold did not desire war with France; he only wished to save a member of his family who had great enemies at Coblentz. The Count d'Artois had retired to Turin with his children, and the Prince de Condé had taken his there too. They displeased the King of Sardinia, and it could not be otherwise with a prudent and economic Court. The Prince de Condé induced the Count d'Artois to summon M. de Calonne to him, who had rendered him very great services. Among other things, M. de Calonne had caused the King to buy the Countship of Clermontois for him, worth 300,000 francs per annum, for the price of 12,000,000, money down, and a life annuity of 600,000 francs, a compact of spoliation which was cancelled by the Constituent Assembly.

M. de Calonne arrived in due course at Turin, where he strongly displeased the Court, as well as the Prince de Condé, to whom it was suggested that he should withdraw, and that he would do better to reconcile himself with France. He removed first with all his family to a poor inn at Stuttgart, until he obtained permission from the Elector of Mayence to reside at Worms.

[1] Inserted passage.

The Count d'Artois wrote, on the 15th of July, 1791, to Leopold to ask him for permission to proceed to Vienna with M. de Calonne. The Emperor regarded this minister as a madman, and as the most dangerous person about the Count d'Artois. He was thoroughly acquainted with all his conduct, and had an exact statement of his extravagances. He sent a very straightforward letter to the Count d'Artois, containing a formal refusal, under the pretext that the moment was not propitious.

Notwithstanding this prohibition, M. de Calonne was imprudent enough to proceed to Vienna, where he arrived on the 25th of January at seven o'clock in the evening. At nine o'clock he received an order from the Emperor to leave Vienna the next day, the minute the gates opened. He decided the Count d'Artois to proceed to Coblentz, a distance of from twenty-five to thirty leagues from Worms, where the Prince de Condé was staying.

Leopold was completely opposed to the war. M. de Calonne distrusted him, and the King of Sardinia persuaded the Count d'Artois to seek another Court, that of Berlin, where he was received, but which, before giving assistance, wished to consult England, then the ally of Prussia. Pitt replied: "We shall give assistance; but in this case we can deal a double blow. We can overthrow the House of Austria at the same time as that of Bourbon. We must appear to come to the aid of the French princes, and say that the Court of Berlin will contribute 50,000 men; that the King of Prussia will take the supreme command, having under him the Duke of Brunswick, his general; that to these 50,000 men the King of Prussia will join

20,000 *émigrés*, taking care to divide them into a number of battalions, each isolated from the others." Pitt added that the most difficult thing was to involve Leopold, who did not desire war; and that, in order to draw him into it, they must ask only 15,000 men from him.

These were the combinations and considerations which led to the conclusion of the treaty of Pilnitz. On reading it attentively one can see the repugnance of Leopold, a repugnance in which he persisted until the day of his death, which occurred soon after.

Francis II., his successor, was hardly twenty years of age. Under the pretext that it was his duty to come to the aid of his unfortunate aunt, an undertaking was wrung from him to serve as auxiliary to one of his Electors, to whom he would supply 15,000 to 18,000 men.

War was accordingly declared, in 1792, by the King of Prussia, and he was the only sovereign who formally declared war against France.

The Austrian army was commanded by the Count of Clairfait. He was already one day's cavalry ride from Rheims when he received an order from the Duke of Brunswick to direct his army corps on Sonnetourbe, seventeen leagues to the left.

M. de Clairfait replied that, should his Majesty the King of Prussia not desire to retain the post of the Grandes Illettes, he begged to be allowed to occupy it, because Dumouriez, who must be aware of its importance, would not fail to seize it.[1] No one is

[1] The letters were seen in the hands of the Duke of Brunswick.—NOTE BY BARÈRE.

ignorant of the fact that, in twenty-two days, seventeen English couriers arrived in the Prussian camp (at Verdun). A decisive battle was expected, and preparations were made. The night before, the Count of Clairfait received a letter from the King of Prussia, who informed him that his army was too fatigued, that he could not give battle, and that he warned the Count of Clairfait in order that he might make his dispositions. The general replied: "Sire, if your army is fatigued, as I cannot doubt after your Majesty's letter, I beg you to let me have the *émigrés*. I only ask you to hold your army in reserve. I will attack the French, and I will answer for the victory."[1]

The Count de Mercy, who was at Brussels, and who had never been in favour of the coalition, soon perceived that he had been tricked by his English and Prussian enemies. He seriously thought of making peace, but the cabinet of St. James', fearing the result of this measure for England, wrote to the Vienna cabinet that what had happened was the result of a misunderstanding. To prove that he acted with all the English good faith, Pitt undertook to supply Austria for the next campaign of 1793 with a fixed contingent of Hessians, Hanoverians, and English. But, as will be seen by the result, this army, instead of being of service to the Austrians, was intended to retard their progress if they directed their march towards Paris too rapidly.

As soon as Valenciennes had fallen into the power of the Austrians, in 1793, the municipality of Cambrai assembled and decided to open the gates of the

[1] Letters seen at Mannheim.—NOTE BY BARÈRE.

town to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, who commanded the Austrian army. The latter was preparing to march on Cambrai, when the Duke of York, who had secret orders, formally notified him that he would not follow him. His instructions, he said, provided that they were to begin by laying siege to Dunkirk, an operation necessarily lengthier and more difficult on account of the fortifications. To act otherwise would be, according to him, to risk losing the fruit of the entire campaign.

The Duke of York must remember the prompt and solemn fashion in which he was driven from the dunes of Dunkirk towards the end of 1793. It was a just punishment for all those British artifices.

In the spring of 1794 Mack arrived from Vienna with a comprehensive and well-devised plan. On examining the state of the army, M. Mack found that there was a deficit of 50,000 men of all arms in the Hessian, Hanoverian, and English contingents. He complained of this deficit to the Archduke Charles, who went to Vienna and brought the Emperor back with him to Brussels, where the latter took up his first position. The attack took place on the Belgian frontier. The battle of Tournai lasted sixteen hours and terminated in favour of the Austrians; but as the English army remained inactive in face of the successes, the Emperor went himself, at nine o'clock on the morning of Ascension Day, to visit the Duke of York at Tournai. This interview resulted in convincing the Emperor that the Duke had express orders from his Court enjoining him always to remain in the rear if the Austrian army gained any success. This led the Emperor to resolve to quit

his army, to take his leave of that of M. de Clairfait and of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, and to return to Brussels. In this town he convened the States-General, and informed them that it was impossible for him to rely upon the fidelity of his allies. He said that he was ready to defend their property in accordance with the oath taken by him on his inauguration, but he must ask them for 40,000 men. This number would almost compensate for the forces of which he was deprived through the defection of England, whose aid would then cease to be indispensable.

The States-General assembled and granted the 40,000 men, but insisted that they should enrol them. They had just emerged from one insurrection, and seemed to wish to organise another. The Emperor rightly refused their claims, and then proceeded to evacuate Flanders and Brabant, thus giving France what forty years of Louis XIV.'s victories had been unable to give her. The Emperor in this manner punished England for her bad faith, besides punishing the avarice of the two orders of the clergy and the nobility in Belgium.

Entry into the Supreme Court of Appeal.

As for myself, having re-entered the class of faithful subjects of the constitution and of political observers, I proceeded to take possession of my place in the Palace of Justice as magistrate of the Supreme Court of Appeal.

In 1791 the Assembly had established the Supreme Court of Appeal, and subsequently decreed that this tribunal should consist of one member for each de-

partment. The department of the Hautes-Pyrénées, which had always honoured me with its confidence, gave me a fresh proof of it by choosing me a member of this Appeal Court. I discharged the duties of this post from the month of October, 1791, up to the date of the formation of the National Convention on the 21st of September, 1792. I had applied for leave of absence in the month of January of that year, in order to arrange matters with my family relating to my succession to my father.

The Duke de Larochefoucauld wishes to make me a Minister.

My departure was hastened by a project which had been conceived by the most virtuous, the most French, the most worthy man I have known in my life—the Duke de Larochefoucauld. This nobleman had received me at his house and at his mother's, Madame Danville, a friend of the celebrated minister Turgot. The duke and his mother wished, they said, to charge themselves with my advancement, and they offered to obtain the appointment of the Ministry of the Interior for me. The duke had had great influence with the King since the acceptance of the constitution. I excused myself on account of my youth and administrative inexperience. I concluded that the only honest way of refusing was to leave for the Pyrenees. I went to take leave of Madame Danville and her son, who made me promise, with many kind expressions, to return to Paris soon.

The Year 1792.—Departure.

I left in the month of January, 1792. My domestic affairs, which had been neglected for three years,

forced me to seek to preserve that portion of my patrimony which the wars of the Revolution had spared. Married in 1785 to a very amiable and rich young woman, who, however, was greatly infatuated in regard to royalism and religion, I met her once more with her amiability and prejudices. I had much to suffer from the violence of her mother against the Jacobins, and from the religious prejudices of the daughter against the deputies of the Constituent Assembly. But I respected the age of the one and the virtue of the other, and endured the discomforts inseparable from the revolutions which divide families and embroil the best friends.

When I arrived at Tarbes, the National Guard turned out to congratulate me on the happy termination of the labours of the Constituent Assembly. I have never been much affected by honorary demonstrations, which may minister to vanity or flatter pride; but, nevertheless, I appreciated the public opinion and the honourable approval of my fellow-citizens of the Pyrenees above everything. I passed six months very agreeably far from the turmoil and political passions of Paris.

During my stay at Tarbes, I called upon all patriots (and that word pronounced in my native country recalls honesty, love of country, and disinterestedness) to celebrate the anniversary of the death of the illustrious Mirabeau, whom I have always regarded as the only real political orator France has ever had. I have always honoured his memory, and I had caused funeral honours to be rendered to him, and his debts to be paid, in virtue of a decree which I obtained in the Constituent Assembly.

In a speech delivered at Tarbes during the ceremony which I had originated, I paid a tribute to his transcendent genius, his profound policy, his courageous patriotism, his energetic perspicacity, and his noble efforts in the Constituent Assembly in defence of the rights of man and public liberty. Moreover, I always keep the marble bust of this great writer and sublime citizen in my room in Paris. It was the chisel of the celebrated Houdon which bade the Carrara marble reproduce the features of that famous victim of royal despotism for a grateful posterity.

The patriotism of the inhabitants of our mountains is sincere, disinterested, and proof against the vicissitudes of power and of fortune. Public spirit was excellent at Tarbes, as, indeed, throughout the department; that is to say, that it was constitutional, and that it did not desire war, but, however, did not fear it. I was obliged to leave the town on the 2nd of August in accordance with a proclamation of the King, who, foreseeing the political storms prepared by his Court, summoned all public functionaries to be at their posts before the 10th of that month under pain of dismissal.

Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, 26th of July, 1792.[1]

This Prusso-German insulter outrages the French nation in his insolent letter. In the same breath he attacks the Revolution, its principles, its supporters, its authors, and its defenders. He threatens liberty, and comes to destroy the sovereignty of the people and to punish the national representation. He does not dis-

[1] Inserted passage.

simulate any of the evil designs of the absolute kings of the North. The foreigner declares himself the enemy of the French and the friend of their King, who henceforth must appear to the minds of all only as the friend of the enemies of France. Brunswick's manifesto enlightens the nation, and decides it to make the most energetic resistance.

Declaration of War against Austria.[1]

The Jacobins were firmly opposed to war, while the Girondins of the Legislative Assembly urgently demanded it. Brissot, a deputy, and Dumouriez, who was then Minister for Foreign Affairs, were the first to call for war against Austria. To them Robespierre and the Jacobins replied: "Before declaring war against Europe overthrow the Court and appoint new generals." How did they answer us? They made excuses for the Court, and it was objected that to speak ill of Lafayette and the generals would be to disturb military discipline and to serve the enemies of the country. It was pointed out to us that all nations, especially Belgium, were ready to join the French, and we were shown the standard of liberty floating over the palaces of kings. The war commenced with reverses, and, after the 10th of August, our frontiers were invaded by the Austrians in Belgium, and by the Prussians at Longwy and Verdun as far as the centre of Champagne. The Girondin ministers then proposed to the Legislative Assembly to abandon Paris and to carry off the King and his family, who were detained at the Temple. Danton alone opposed this step.

[1] Inserted passage.

Return to Paris.

I arrived in Paris on the 8th of August. Everything was in a great ferment. The Palace of the Tuileries resembled a fortified place threatened with a siege. The whole of Paris had been transformed into a heavily-armed camp, and people's minds were exasperated by the first effects of the declaration of war. Civil war had not yet come to blows, but it was in all hearts and burned already in all eyes. The nobles and lords had hastened in from all the provinces and filled the Tuileries to the roof of the building.

I leave it for history to decide on which side was the aggression—on the side of the people or on the side of the King. What is certain is that the great, the very great majority of the Legislative Assembly was royalist, and that it favoured all the opinions and all the schemes of the Court against the minority, which was called patriotic. It was said at the time that the principal deputies of that minority, the Girondins, were ambitious to be ministers, and thus wished to force the King to summon them to his council. Was this the truth or calumny? Again it is for history to separate these facts from the clouds with which they have been covered by parties.

It is beyond doubt that from the 8th of August people spoke in Paris of putting an end to the King's party, and of finding out whether or no there was a country and a constitution.

The 10th of August, 1792.[1]

To mask the conspiracy of the Court against the

[1] Inserted fragments.

constitution and the Legislative Assembly, a plot was hatched at the Tuileries for transferring the King and the legislative body to Rouen, where there was a gathering of Swiss troops; but the deputies opposed this course.

To compel them to assent the Legislative Assembly was told that the lives of its members were not safe in Paris. Fear has always been the means of the government to obtain all the laws necessary for its despotism.

Louis XVI., 1792.

Louis XVI. was insensible to the shame of appearing the accomplice of the *émigrés*, the Prussians and Austrians. The foreigner had announced to him his insolent claim of establishing him on his ancient throne of divine right. The King, it is said, did not disavow the intentions of the foreigner—the King who, according to the memoirs of the Prussian minister Hardemberg, had been the first to ask the foreigner's aid.

The King thus declared himself unworthy of the throne, supported or strengthened by foreign bayonets or by the swords of the *émigrés*—the assassins of their country. In acquiescing in the solicitations of a prince as immoral as the Count de Provence, or as absolutist and atrocious as the Count d'Artois, he had judged himself. The nation could not quietly await the shame and calamity of a foreign invasion. France had not the right to abdicate her nationality, and to ignominiously abandon her existence to hordes of barbarians and bands of Bourbonists.

Position of Louis XVI. in 1792.

The men who were most devoted to the country spoke of the treason of the ministers and generals;

the weak and hypocritical took the treason as a pretext for serving their country lukewarmly or for deserting it. Louis XVI. had too clearly shown himself in his true colours to dissipate either the suspicions of correspondence with the enemy or the spirit of ill-will which had been justly excited against him since the beginning of the Revolution, on the 23rd of June, 1789. No Frenchman believed in his good-will after his declaration, or his protest, of the 20th of June, on the occasion of his flight towards the frontier. He passed for an impostor, having first of all given his adhesion to the constitution and then disavowed it. He was believed to be carrying on correspondence with his brothers, who moved in the midst of the *émigrés* and excited the foreigners against France. No department would believe any longer in the word of a King to whom the manifestoes and proclamations of a Brunswick spoke of devotion, while declaring war to the death against the nation. No party in France would entrust fresh forces to such a King, whose prejudices and despotism were the pretext for foreign agression. The liberty of France and the independence of the nation were at stake. Everything was against the King, and everything for the country. Moreover, Louis XVI., being suspected of treason, was given no forces to resist the enemy, who had been advancing since the first days of August. It was only after the 10th of that month, after the King and his fatal influence had been got rid of, that the devotion of the nation supplied a hundred thousand volunteers in an instant, full of courage and enthusiasm for the sacred cause of liberty. France suddenly found herself between the sad alternatives of being invaded

and divided, or of dethroning a perjured monarch. *This act of justice was a necessity for the existence of the nation.*

General Dumouriez appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1792.

It was Marie Antoinette who made this appointment, and who imposed this minister on Louis XVI. Bonne-Carrère, a diplomatic intriguer, constantly employed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as spy or *observer*, according to the language of good society, gave much time and attention to the task of inducing the Jacobins to agree to Dumouriez's promotion to this ministry. Bonne-Carrère was one of the heads of the committee of correspondence of the Jacobins. This fact of the influence of the Queen and the intrigues of Bonne-Carrère was exposed by Brissot to the Convention in the evening sitting of the 3rd of April, 1793, in replying to an accusation brought against him by Robespierre. (*Moniteur*, No. 96, April 6, 1793.)[1]

The 10th of August.

The 9th was stormy, and marked by distrust and gloomy forebodings. The nobles armed themselves, and the patriots met together. The tocsin sounded at midnight. I awoke with a start in my lodging in the Rue de Richelieu, whence I could hear all the bells of Paris from the third story overlooking the boulevard. The tocsin rang all night. The battalions of Brest and Marseilles were in motion at daybreak. The inhabitants of the suburbs were armed

[1] End of the inserted fragments.

with pikes and courage. The different parties were face to face after nine o'clock; the artillery on both sides was ready to go into action; the Swiss regiments were in arms in front of the railings and the booths which they used as a rampart. At ten o'clock the roar of cannon and the fusillade of small arms began, and the engagement commenced. It was not noon when all was over. The Swiss were exterminated. The nobles and the knights fled from the Tuileries by the galleries of the Museum, and escaped by the courts of the Louvre. The men of Brest, Marseilles, and Paris, entered the castle pell-mell. The King had already left, and had made his way into the hall of the Legislative Assembly with M. Roederer, procurator-general of the department, and two Swiss generals. When the King left the Tuileries the action was at its fiercest. The King was placed in the reporter's box which was behind the president's chair. When he had entered the box, the Swiss generals asked his Majesty what orders he desired to give them. "*Return to your posts and do your duty*," replied Louis XVI., coldly. The deliberations of the Assembly continued with the deputies of the minority; the majority had been insulted and had fled. Everyone is acquainted with the melancholy events of that terrible day, the 10th of August, which destroyed at one blow the monarchy, the constitution, and the prosperity of France for many years.

On the evening of that sad day the King and his family were conducted to the Temple. A report made to the Assembly was followed by the fall of Louis XVI. The people in their anger overthrew the four equestrian statues of Louis XIII., Louis XIV., Louis XV., and

Henry IV. The hatred of royalty had reached its climax, and public opinion no longer knew where to fix its hopes, or to go for advice.

The Supreme Court of Appeal takes the Oath of Fidelity to the Nation.[1]

When the law of the 10th of August, relative to the suspension of the executive power, was presented to the Supreme Court of Appeal, and registered by it, I hastened to demand that without further delay the whole tribunal should take to the Legislative Assembly the same oath which that Assembly had itself just taken to the nation. My motion was unanimously accepted, and all the judges met together for the purpose of carrying out the most sacred of duties—that of swearing fidelity to the nation and its liberties. The tribunal ordered that copies should be forwarded to me of the two reports of the National Assembly which recorded these facts. The documents ran thus:

Extract from the Report of the Assembly.

"Paris, the 14th of August, 1792.

"The members of the Supreme Court of Appeal are admitted to the bar. The President of the Tribunal makes the following speech: 'This morning the law of the 10th of August, relative to the suspension of the executive power, was presented to the Supreme Court of Appeal, which immediately caused it to be published and entered in its registers, and at the same time it comes into the midst of the legislative body to take the same oath that you have taken.

[1] Inserted passage.

It comes to swear to you to maintain liberty and equality, and to die at its post to defend them.'

"The President of the National Assembly replied: 'When the people invested you with their confidence, they counted on your devotion to their cause. You come up to their expectations. Their goodwill and esteem will be your recompense. The Assembly invites you to its sitting.'

"The Assembly decrees that the speech of the president of the Supreme Court of Appeal and the reply of its president be printed and sent to all the tribunals.

"Collated with the original by us, Secretary of the National Assembly at Paris, the 11th of September, 1792, in the year IV. of Liberty.

(Signed) "TARTANAL, President.

(Signed) "HENRY LARIVIÈRE, Secretary.

"Forwarded by order of the Supreme Court of Appeal to M. Barère, one of its members, by me, the undersigned clerk,

(Signed) "G. HOMS."

Extract from the Report of the National Assembly.

"Paris, the 6th of September, 1792.

"The members of the Supreme Court of Appeal and of the Criminal Court are admitted to the bar. They take the oath to maintain liberty and equality, and to protect the properties of personal right.

"The National Assembly accepts their oath, and invites them to the honours of the sitting.

"Collated with the original by us, Secretary of the National Assembly at Paris, the 12th of September, 1792, in the year IV. of Liberty.

(Signed) "P. H. Ch. Ad. Goupillaux, Secretary.

"Forwarded by order of the Supreme Court of Appeal to M. Barère, one of its members, by me, the undersigned clerk,

(Signed) "G. Homs."

Two Letters from Danton.

Four days after the 10th of August, I received the following letter from Danton, who had been appointed Minister of Justice:

Paris, the 14th of August, 1792.
(The year IV. of Liberty.)

Sir,—I beg you to accept a post as member of the Council of Justice, to which I have just appointed you. It is in no way incompatible with your duties, and it is in no way arduous, inasmuch as it is only a matter of a few hours a week.

Your talents and, above all, your patriotism impose upon you the law of adding this task to all those which you fulfil so well.

Liberty and unfortunate persons would be indebted to me for my choice and to you for your acceptance.

(Signed) Danton,
Minister of Justice.

M. Barère de Vieuzac.

At first I refused this appointment as being incompatible with the duties of a judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal. Danton wrote me a second letter, which decided me to accept the work which he proposed. This work only lasted until the 21st of September, the date when I was appointed a member of the National Convention.

Paris, the 30th of September, 1792.
(The year IV. of Liberty and I. of Equality.)

I believe, sir, that the observations which have been made to you by your tribunal, although praiseworthy at bottom, are, nevertheless, merely scrupulous, and, I would even say, devoid of foundation. The post of member of the Council of Justice presents nothing which resembles a public function, inasmuch as the Minister of Justice is under no obligation to refer himself to the decision of his council. You are simply friends whom he consults at need, and, indeed, such a council, in the event of a matter having to pass before the tribunal, could not in any case take exception to you, since there is no incompatibility even of opinions.

That, at least, is how I look at matters, and, supposing that the members of the Supreme Court of Appeal should insist, I beg you always to continue to give me your services until I can find a successor capable of replacing you to my satisfaction.

(Signed) DANTON,
Minister of Justice.

To M. Barère de Vieuzac,
Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal.

Visit to Danton, and meeting with M. de Talleyrand—Danton lets the Abbé Bousquet perish, whom Barère believed he had saved.

Arbitrary acts were being committed in all parts, at Paris as in the departments. Hatred of the King's agents was extreme; hatred of the priests was atrocious. The commune of Paris seconded these movements of public violence, or at least did not oppose them. In an instant the priests were arrested in Paris, and shut up in the church and convent of the Carmelites. The shouts and threats raised around this prison inspired those within with just apprehensions. One of them, the Abbé Bousquet of Narbonne, whom I had known well at Toulouse, and who had been attracted to Paris as *savant canoniste* by the Cardinal de Brienne, had been seized

by the satellites of the commune in the seminary of the Eudists, where he was lodging. He thought of me, and wrote a letter asking me to bring about his release. On the 31st of August I received his letter, the details of which made me shudder.

I called the same evening upon Danton, the Minister of Justice, whom I only knew slightly. M. Fabre d'Églantine, his secretary, to whom I spoke, told me to return at eleven o'clock in the evening, when I might find him alone and be able to speak to him regarding the Abbé Bosquet.

As eleven struck I was in the Place Vendôme. I entered the library of the Minister of Justice, and there found M. Fabre d'Églantine, with whom I conversed while awaiting the minister. Midnight struck, and the only arrivals I saw were the national guards of Melun, who came to ask for passports for M. Adrien Duport, former member of the Constituent Assembly, who had been lodged in the prisons of Melun. M. Fabre d'Églantine made me a sign to pass into the *salon* next to the library, there to await the arrival of Danton. I found the Bishop Talleyrand in the *salon*, in leather breeches and top-boots, a round hat, a small cutaway coat and a small pigtail. I had been closely connected with him during the three years of the Constituent Assembly. He approached me in a friendly manner. I appeared astonished at seeing him at that hour at the house of the Minister of Justice. "*The fact is*," said he, "*I am about to start for London in the morning on a mission from the executive power*. I have come for my passports, which Danton should bring me from the executive council, which is now sitting at Servan's house." "Danton has not yet

returned, and I am waiting for him too," I said, "to save an unfortunate abbé in custody at the Carmelites."

We waited patiently until half-past one. It is never too late to do a good action, or to save a friend or a fellow-creature.

At last Danton arrived. He showed me into his study while he spoke to M. de Talleyrand in the *salon*. A quarter of an hour later he came to me and asked me the reason of my very late visit. Fabre replied that I had been awaiting him since eleven o'clock. Then I handed him the letter of the Abbé Bousquet, for whose good principles and patriotism I myself answered.

"Very well; it is all right," he said to me in such a frank tone as did not admit of the least doubt; "your friend will be released to-morrow." I repeated his name and my request to him, and observed that I handed him M. Bousquet's letter as a memorandum. He again promised me his liberty, and I withdrew.

I never slept so well. I believed my friend saved, and I expected him the next day or the day after.

But soon (the 2nd of September) the horrible assassinations in the prisons threw Paris into mourning and consternation. At this atrocious news I became more anxious than ever. I did not dare to go to the Eudistes to demand the Abbé Bousquet, and I believed that he was hiding during these barbarities so dishonourable for the name of France. Alas! *I never saw him again*. He must have been forgotten by *the Minister of the Revolution*.

Spirit of the French Army in 1792.[1]

After the 10th of August M. Lafayette disapproved of that day when the people of Paris resisted the armed despotism of a perfidious and perjured king, who only met the confidence of the nation by an explosion of civil war. M. Lafayette was in command of the army of the Ardennes. Sixty thousand men rejected the liberty-destroying orders of their general, and refused to march against the courageous authors of the victory of the 10th of August, which had overturned the throne. This defection was a credit to the French army, and was soon afterwards recognised and confirmed by the other armies which were then scattered along the frontiers and in the fortified places. This abandonment of a perjured king by the French army was the second legitimate and national defection since 1789. And such will ever be the spirit and conduct of the French army on great and perilous occasions. Such it was, this military spirit, on the 20th of March, 1815, when the army abandoned the perjured and fugitive Louis XVIII. to rally under the glorious tricoloured flag and under the command of Napoleon.

In France the soldier is a citizen, and the citizen a soldier. No one forsakes the country for a king or for the foreigner; but everyone forsakes princes, whoever they may be, in order merely to serve his country.

After the 10th of August, 1792.

Latour-Maubourg, of the Constituent Assembly, left the army of the Ardennes with General Lafayette and an officer of engineers, Bureaux de Pusy, all

[1] Inserted passage.

three being ex-members of the Constituent Assembly. The enemy stopped them and gave them hospitality worthy of the barbarians of the North by shutting them up in the citadel of Olmütz.

The Legislative Assembly summons a National Convention.

The Legislative Assembly, being reduced to a minority which was powerless to remedy the calamities it had invoked by its divisions and its perpetual attacks upon the constitution, found itself obliged to call upon the French people to hold fresh elections. It referred the judgment of the King to the new Assembly which was about to be convened, and formulated the grounds for the King's disability and the counts of the indictment. It asked for deputies who, when they met in a National Convention, should have full powers and a mandate to judge the King, now in the Temple, and to consider means for *saving the country in its danger.*

Indeed, the Prussian army was making forced marches across the plains of Champagne. Verdun and Longwy were in the power of Frederick William. The boldness of the Paris volunteers and those of several other departments commanded by Generals Dumouriez, Kellermann, and Beurnonville made a sufficiently vigorous resistance to enable them to await the arrival of fresh battalions. The epidemic which prevailed in the Prussian army brought about its defeat, and soon France was delivered from those Northern hordes which had been induced to advance by secret correspondence carried on for a long period with France.

Hymn of the Marseillais.[1]

If anything can recall the songs of Tyrtæus in Lacedæmon, it is the battle-song of Rouget de Lisle. This hymn, called the Marseillaise, has presided over the formation of our armies, our battles and our victories.

Ah! who is there amongst us who will not remember until his last breath those ravishing impressions which made all hearts thrill when the beautiful hymn of the Marseillais was heard? Kings, armed in the cause of a treacherous king, were penetrating into the heart of France, who on her part was without an army, and, so to speak, without other arms than her courage and the holiness of her cause. The boldest, while rallying to the defence of the country, doubted its triumph, while timid minds had already lost all hope.

A poet-warrior grows indignant at these movements of weakness. He takes up his lyre and calls upon the *children of the country;* he points out to them *the day of glory is at hand;* he shows them held aloft *the bloody standard of tyranny;* those *ferocious soldiers* whom you hear *raging in your fields; they come to fall upon our daughters and our comrades, and to slaughter them in our arms.*

"*To arms, citizens! Form your battalions!*" And the thronging citizens arm themselves, and the battalions form up and close their ranks. "*March! march!*" And they march; they rush forward already victorious and triumphant in hope.

"*Let their impure blood drench our furrows.*" And the blood of the enemies of liberty was shed, and avenged that of its defenders and martyrs.

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[1] Inserted passage.

From Strasburg, where this masterpiece, this lyrical phenomenon first appeared, it reached Paris. It began to circulate among the patriots, and soon the streets, the public squares and entertainments resound with it. On that pompous stage, where all the arts dispute the privilege of alluring, whose seductions should be more frequently turned to the benefit of public spirit, suddenly a performer with virile and sonorous voice would chant the hymn of the Marseillais. The chorus repeats the warlike refrain after him; the enthusiastic citizens mingle their voices with those of the chorus, and cheers and shouts of "Long live the Republic!" burst from all sides. After each couplet, they have to wait until the frenzy has subsided before proceeding with the song.

Let us recall what rapturous emotion, in the midst of these energetic movements, was aroused by those four noble and touching lines:

> Français, en guerriers magnanimes,
> Portez ou retenez vos coups;
> Épargnez ces tristes victimes,
> A regret s'armant contre vous.

Let us recall how the feelings of all became terrible at these words of the same verse:

> Mais le despote sanguinaire,
> Mais les complices de Bouillé,
> Tous ces tigres qui, sans pitié,
> Déchirent le sein de leur mère!
> Aux armes citoyens, etc.

Let us recall, above all—ah! could we ever forget it?—the magical effect upon such a numerous assemblage, when, sinking down on their knees and diminish-

ing the sound of the music, the singer and the chorus chanted with emotion the sentiment:

> Amour sacré de la patrie,
> Conduis, soutiens nos bras vengeurs.
> Liberté, liberté chérie,
> Combats avec tes défenseurs.

Both in the pit and in the boxes the audience were on their knees; sympathetic tears flowed from all eyes; women and children, following their example, raised their hands to heaven; all hearts beat in unison, and seemed to strive emulously to display their love for their country.

What is it, then, that has taken the fashion, the interest, and the charm from this sublime song? In the first place, the circumstances are not the same. An honourable peace acquired by conquest has disarmed the majority of the powers which at that time entered into a coalition to fight us. The enemy who remains, far from menacing the heart of France, has ceded several fine provinces to her, and the need of a general peace increases every day. It is not astonishing that the citizens should find less pleasure in warlike songs summoning them to arms. But without reckoning all the reasons which one does not confess, another reason is given. It is said that during the execrable Reign of Terror criminals profaned this hymn, and made it the signal for carnage. Vain, or rather perfidious, pretext! What! When, in the name of a religion of peace, miserable fanatics slaughtered thousands of their brothers, did they not arm themselves with the most venerated signs of religion itself? Had they not words from the ritual and the sacrament on their

lips? And have pious minds renounced these signs and rites for this reason? It would then suffice for what is evil to use what is good, in order that what is good might cease to exist.

But the snare is more cunning and dangerous than people think. It is by such means that discredit is cast upon the words *republic* and *republicans*, the title *citizen*, which is so pleasant; the new division of *time*, the new system of *measures*, the *national* festivals, and, indeed, all that began to be republican in our habits. But it may be urged that tyrants decreed the establishment of these customs and institutions, and that it is therefore necessary to reject and abolish them as we destroyed the tyrants. Ah! why do you not abandon the country they lived in and the air they breathed too?

We predict for Rouget de Lisle that, if ever the country should find itself in the same dangers, or in others even more imminent, which would compel the friends of liberty and the constitution to arm themselves in its defence, he would see his "Chant Marseillais" renew all its sway, because people's hearts would regain all their enthusiasm. He was therefore right in choosing for his motto the *exegi monumentum* of Horace. Yes, his hymn is a monument which will do honour to his memory and which will live in the memory of man as long as the immortal days of the war of liberty.[1]

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[1] The following note of Barère is written on the margin of a sheet of paper: "That homicidal song, the *Réveil du peuple*, divided the citizens and struck at those who loved the hymn of the Marseillais. Royalism, triumphing for three years, robbed the song of republican combats of its charm and vogue. Assassination had taken the place of victory."

Elections of the year 1792.

The elections progressed with a rapidity in keeping with the events of that period. I was simultaneously appointed member of the Convention by the department of the Seine-et-Oise (Versailles) and by the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées. However flattering my choice by the electors of Versailles, a town in which I had resided during the first year of the States-General, I was obliged to declare for the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées, my native country and the place which had already appointed me its deputy in the States-General and its member of the Supreme Court of Appeal. I made this choice with all the more pleasure, since, in vacating my place as deputy for the Seine-et-Oise, I made room for M. Chénier in the Convention, the celebrated author of several tragedies, who was praised for his patriotism, wisdom, and insight.

[He was, nevertheless, a very pretentious and irascible poet. He never forgave the Committee of Public Safety for having disapproved of his tragedy *Timoléon*, which was greatly applauded at the Théâtre Français by the royalists. When, after Thermidor 9, he saw the Committee of Public Safety denounced in the Convention by Lecointre of Versailles, he joined with Tallien, Fréron, and especially Sieyès, to bring about the proscription of the denounced decemvirs. Like Sieyès, he was a violently partisan member of the committee of twenty-one which proposed the impeachment and arrest of the denounced persons.]

Elections in Paris.

In Paris the elections were held after the days of the 2nd and 3rd of September, which seemed revivals

of the reign of the insane Charles VI. and the famous Queen Isabel of Bavaria. Among the elected were Robespierre, Tallien, Fréron, Marat, Panis, Sergent, Danton, etc., the last on the list being the Duke of Orleans under the name of Égalité. Several deputies of departments regarded this nomination as the effect of the orders which had been given by those who hoped to share the protectorate destined for him. He was still looked upon—notwithstanding the popular varnish with which that election had covered him—as maintaining the rights of domination, so deeply rooted are monarchist habits in the French character. From that time several men were pointed out in the Convention who desired royalty, because it would serve their own interests, rather than the severe republic. Others were indicated who were at the head of armies, and who kept in the closest and most direct relationship with the family of that man whom it was desired to set up on the first ruins of liberty. These last hopes of tyranny, which were supposed to have been cherished by several ambitious and audacious men who had not recoiled before the prison massacres, ended by dividing the Convention into two quite distinct camps—those who frankly wished for the republic, and those who inclined hypocritically towards the monarchy.

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

On the 10th of August the throne fell; the conspiracy of the kings was laid bare. The frontiers were attacked on the side of Champagne, and Verdun and Longwy fell into the hands of the Prussians and the *émigrés*. This sudden invasion threatened France and terrified the people of Paris. The bloody days of the 2nd and 3rd of September went beyond the object of the Revolution in their excesses and barbarities, of which the authors have remained unpunished and unknown. It was under these terrible auspices that the new representatives of the people assembled.

The National Convention was opened on the 21st of September, while the Prussians were still defiling the land with their presence. The Republic was decreed, or rather improvised, by the hatred of royalty. Moreover, it was established *without debate, and by a simple sitting and rising;* whereas in other times such a fundamental resolution as that of the abolition of the monarchy and the adoption of the forms of republican government would have been preceded by a lengthy circumstantial report, calculated to procure the sanction of national opinion for such a change. But the position of France was critical, and it was urgent to set the Republic in opposition to the invasion of foreign kings.

After the 10th of August, and the arrival of the Prussian army at Verdun and Longwy, there was no course to take but to launch the republican government at the head of the kings of Europe. Only the deputies Quinette and Jean Debry demanded the adjournment of the proposal made by Collot; and the most difficult question, the most delicate of all, was swept away with enthusiasm in a first sitting at which no man yet knew another.

Concerning the Republic voted on the 21st of September, 1792.

It was rather inspired than deliberate; it was accepted with unanimity, without appearance of divisions of parties, factions, or coteries; and it was decreed without discussion, without debate, on a simple motion which was not supported by any setting forth of motives. This Republic, unexpected by the servile, was a necessity for free men. The vital and profound passions of liberty which had given birth to the Revolution of 1789, the necessity for fresh guarantees, and the indignation aroused by the events of the 10th of August, necessitated this *improvised* creation of the Republic. Moreover, the French character required decision and promptitude. *The French easily take a dislike to what they cannot obtain at once.* To decree the republican form of government at the first sitting of the Convention was to obey the national character and the spirit of the time.

I cannot believe that a republic is suitable to nations without virtue, to nations spoiled by the very excess of civilisation, to enormous capitals which can only live on corruption, excess, abuses, and monarchical vices. If ever the French got tired of kings—as

in Rome, when the Tarquins were expelled—if ever, as the result of the excesses of military tyranny and constitutional despotism, there arrived a period of public reason, then it might be possible that the French nation (which has good sense) would, in the long run and after great misfortunes, return not to the old republican government, which had grown odious and incompatible with its character and its morals, but to a federal constitution.

Plan for a Federal Republic.

The united departments of France would have a president, the image of the monarch, who would only spend a million on his civil list instead of the thirty or forty millions which the simulacrum of a king costs. The legislative power would be composed, first, of a Chamber of Representatives, and, secondly, of a non-hereditary Federal Chamber, with privilege of birth. The number of members of the first chamber, that of the representatives, might be set down at 629; they would be directly chosen by the electoral bodies of the departments and *arrondissements*. The Federal Chamber would only number 164 members, one for each department, and three for each military division. Paris would be the centre of the ministerial and administrative government; but there would be a federal town, shared in turn by the towns of France, where the meetings of the two chambers would be held, and would in this manner be more independent.

The Convention becomes divided.

Parties soon commenced to form. The Paris deputies, who were both feared and hated, all took their

places on the left side of the chamber, which was the same one in which the Constituent Assembly had sat. The deputies of the Gironde, who had all figured in the Legislative Assembly, took their seats on the right side, on the benches from the President's chair, to the end of the hall. They scrutinised and observed one another. Thus passed the first months, October and November, with some excitement caused by the atrocious manner in which Marat, deputy for Paris, abused the liberty of writing and printing.

Perhaps this classification of deputies exercised more influence than is thought on the state of opposition which was not slow to appear. There would not have been any *mountain* if there had not been a *plain*, and the name of Girondins would not have become the name of a faction if the deputies of the Gironde had not begun to call the deputies of the left side Maratists.

However that may be, the two parties which were to divide the National Convention were not long in calling each other Girondins and Montagnards; and the Convention, which was the sole hope and the great shield of France, thus saw itself broken up into factions and different associations. The volunteers who were marching in arms to the frontiers from all directions were alone exclusively animated by love of their country, and deeply alive to its dangers. There alone dwelt enthusiasm, true civil and military courage, and, above all, union.

As for Marat, it is true to say that, like the ultra-revolutionary foreigners, he was abhorred even more than the anarchical and sanguinary pages of his execrable journal.

Foreign Spies—Niquille.

Foreigners were sent into France, in 1792, by the *émigrés* and the English government to take an active part in the troubles or to excite disorder in Paris and certain indicated departments.

The proof, with mention of names, is seen in the memoirs of Bertrand de Moleville of Toulouse, a Royalist intriguer, ex-minister of Louis XVI. The foreigners who had thronged to Paris from 1791 and 1792 were employed by this former minister of Louis XVI., either in the groups or meetings of the people, or in the tribunes of the National Assembly.

There was in Paris a Swiss, named Niquille, who had been attracted by the Revolution, and had held subaltern posts in the police, and boasted his attachment to the Republican party while in the pay of the Royalists, so as to become the intermediary of the manœuvres of both parties. This Niquille boasted of having had a share in the deeds of the 10th of August, 1792, whereas Bertrand de Moleville describes him in his memoirs as an *agent on whom the Court party might rely*. He did so much that, after the downfall of the Throne, the Commune of Paris appointed him, in December, 1792, *its agent for the seizure of the property of those accused of emigration*. Strong suspicions were aroused as to the manner in which this commission was carried out by Niquille, and the Minister of the Interior, Roland, was compelled to call upon the Commune of Paris to render an account of the conduct of this agent who was unfaithful and favourable to the *émigrés*. This did not prevent the Swiss, Niquille, from eventually obtaining an appointment as inspector-general of police; but, notwithstanding the protection of Barras,

the 18th of Brumaire destroyed his hopes and his intrigues. He was incarcerated in the Conciergerie, where he passed as a prison spy who was charged to note and report the opinions of persons arrested at that time. He was, nevertheless, included in the list of those transported to Madagascar as the result of the explosion of the 2nd of Nivôse.

Curious Note on the Designs entertained by Brissot.[1]

In the first sittings of the Convention those who were called in the Legislative Assembly the Brissotins did not fail to form a coalition with those who were then called Girondins, and to form a majority which already showed itself very exacting and especially hostile towards the Paris deputies and the men who had come from the Commune of the 10th of August.

I only knew the frankly national party, although it was neither the most numerous nor the best supported in that capital, which was more occupied with its interests and its exclusive domination than with the rights and liberties of France. I was in a difficult and even dangerous position in the midst of these parties, irritated and exclusive in their ambitious dissensions, when, in the course of the month of December, 1792, I was approached in the Convention by a former deputy of the Legislative Assembly re-elected to the Convention. He spoke to me of the grief he felt at seeing a conflict, which would be terrible in its consequences, break out between the Girondins and the Montagnards while so many untoward events necessitated the union of the representatives of the people without distinction of parties

[1] Inserted passage.

or political opinions. He spoke to me of Gensonné as chief of the Girondins, not as the most fluent, but as the most able and best qualified for statesmanship. He added that Vergniaud and Guadet had shown themselves the most eloquent. As for Brissot, he said that he had great attainments and a great spirit of intrigue; that he was, especially by his relations with the English, outside the party of the Gironde with which he united under certain circumstances. "I was," said he, "a member of the Committee of Eleven of the Legislative Assembly. One day, when leaving the committee-room with Brissot, I heard him speak with the Girondins of his correspondence in England, and his words singularly astonished me when he expressed himself in favour of the Duke of York with much interest and warmth."

"That is an important fact," said I to my colleague, "and I could scarcely credit it if you, who have been with Brissot in the Legislative Assembly, did not assure me of its truth."

"I will do more, I will write it for you with my own hand."

And he went to the secretary's desk, where he wrote the following note, which he handed to me:

Textual Copy of the Note in question.

"Brissot, Pétion de Villeneuve, Guadet and *Jansonet*, and Rabot of Saint-Etienne.

"On the 17th of July, on the staircase of the Committee of Eleven in the Legislative Assembly, Brissot spoke to his associates in these terms:

"'I will let you see this evening, in my correspondence with the cabinet of St. James, that it rests with us to amalgamate our constitution with that of England by making the Duke of York constitutional king in place of Louis XVI.'

"See the speech of Brissot from the tribune of the Legislative Assembly on the 19th of this month of July, 1792."

This note greatly astonished me, but, to support it by facts, my colleague told me to read Brissot's speech in question in the newspapers carefully.[1]

For my part I was one of the first to attack Marat from the tribune, and to invoke the penalties of the law or imprisonment at Charenton upon the author of so many inflammatory writings. The motions which I submitted to the Convention against him and his adherents in the months of October and November, 1792, are a convincing proof of this; they are in the *Moniteur* of that day. I was even obliged to decree the penalty of death against any individual who *should propose or advocate laws for the distribution of property, or agrarian laws.* This was one of the usual objects of Marat's declamations in his journal.

I am appointed President of the Convention.

As I am not writing the history of the Convention here, I pass rapidly to the matters which concern me and which relate to the object of these memoirs. I was the fourth President of the Convention. They were appointed for a fortnight only, as had been the practice in the Constituent Assembly. The possibility had not then been conceived even of the annual presidency or the presidency of five years confided to one person, and that after the approval of the monarch. It was reserved for the despotism of Bonaparte to invent this kind of legislative servitude, which his successors have not failed to maintain, because the usages, the means, or the inventions of

[1] End of the inserted passage.

despotism acquire a sort of perpetuity through the cowardice of spirit and the venality of the functionaries of France.

I cannot imagine to what motive I was indebted for this honour, since I was isolated in the Convention. I did not belong, and never have belonged, to any party or faction. In any case, I was its president in the second fortnight of November, 1792. At that time public opinion was greatly exasperated against the agents of Royalism and of the 10th of August. The presence of the allied enemies on the frontiers irritated every mind. The Commune of Paris had pretensions to power and influence incompatible with public tranquillity and the calmness necessary for the labours of the Convention. My occupancy of the chair was very stormy, and, what was stranger still, it was the Girondins and the Montagnards combined, who proposed the same course of slander and persecution against me. Hoping to give a greater solemnity to my accusation during my presidency, a motion was submitted, seconded by M. Guadet of Bordeaux, for making an immediate report, so long awaited, upon *the papers found in the iron chest at the Tuileries on the 10th of August.*

I am compromised by the Papers in the Iron Chest.

The report was made two days later. In giving M. Ruhl, reporter of the committee, permission to speak on the documents of the 10th of August, I little thought that the first report of that inquisitorial committee would be directed against myself. M. Ruhl commenced his report by saying that the first documents in the iron chest having mentioned the name of

President Barère, it was necessary to begin by superseding him. M. Guadet, ex-President, attacked the Chair with a zeal which to me seemed terrific. I went to the side of the tribune the better to hear the alleged counts of the indictment. They may be read, together with my reply, in the *Moniteur* of the end of November, 1792.

My fatal destiny, which has always pursued me, caused me to be accused of being a Royalist when it was the fashion to prosecute the Royalists. In the same manner I was prosecuted as a Republican when the Republicans were proscribed, and they desired to destroy me as being a Girondin when the Girondins were condemned. Thus there will always be seen in Paris the vile agents of the various governments which followed one another, and the wretched journalists who have sold themselves to all governments to attack the weak, and accuse and banish them by imputing to them opinions which at each epoch entail exile.

The silence in the chamber was profound. The reporter read two letters from M. de la Porte, intendant of the civil list, who had perished after the 10th of August. In these letters M. de la Porte said that he had made a thousand efforts with the committee of domains and with M. Barère, the reporter of that committee. In another letter M. de la Porte informed the King that M. Barère had promised to immediately conclude the affairs of His Majesty, either in regard to domains or hunting. These letters were accompanied by a commentary of suspicions on the partiality for the King's interests with which I was credited, and on the supposition that I had sought to favour the intrigues of the intendant of the civil list. No

assembly was ever more suspicious or more easy to anger against its own members than the Convention. Everyone was anxiously awaiting the result. While the reporter Ruhl was still speaking, and seemed, notwithstanding his known probity, to make me appear a partisan of the King during the Constituent Assembly, I spoke to M. Baudouin, printer of the Assembly, asking him to send immediately to the printing-office for my reports on the domains of the civil list and the King's hunting which I had made to the Constituent Assembly in 1791.

When the report was finished I expressed my profound surprise at being the first object of the investigations of a committee of the Assembly when there were so many other persons implicated by the papers in the iron chest who seemed by their conduct and their principles fitted to relieve me of the honours of that terrifying priority. But, I proceeded, as I am the first accused, I will be the first justified of those suspicions of Royalism, having proved during three years to the States-General and the Constituent Assembly that I was devoted solely to the nation, its rights and interests; having constantly voted against the Court and the ministers, whose principles I knew and whose corruptions I had never feared, since I had, on the contrary, sacrificed two-thirds of my rich patrimony to the successes of liberty. The best reply to these suspicious machinations was to read to the Convention several of the most energetic passages of my two reports to the Constituent Assembly. Immediately all the members of the Convention were convinced that far from having favoured the pretensions of the King and the intentions of his steward, I had rigidly stood out for the rights of the nation and set

strict limits on the rights of hunting and of passage over neighbouring estates; that I had obliged the King to close the parks of his castles and only to hunt in enclosed parks; and, finally, that I was the first who had proposed and decreed that the King should set the example of a monarch subject to the same laws as other citizens, and that in consequence his domains, castles, parks, and forests should pay taxes proportionately.

The inhabitants of the villages surrounding Versailles came to the bar of the Constituent Assembly to complain of the abuses of the King's hunting over their heritages and crops. These inhabitants came before the committee of domains with the same claims, and when I announced to them a few days later the decree I had caused to be issued, they expressed the deepest gratitude to me. The electors of Seine-et-Oise, who were nearly all proprietors of lands adjacent to the royal forests and parks, elected me to the Convention in the month of September, 1791, in token of the justice I had rendered them against the insolent vexations and pretensions of the King's agents and flunkeys.

Bonaparte revoked those laws of taxation, exempting from their operation all the imperial possessions, castles, domains, parks, forests, houses, and palaces.

I was interrupted in the reading of the reports which justified me, and the members cried unanimously: "Let the president take his place, and let the previous question on the report of the committee be put to the vote." I was sent back to the presidential chair with cheers and applause which, under the circumstances, were very flattering.

The reporter Ruhl continued his reports against several known persons who were accused from the

depths of the iron chest by their names, their advice, and their correspondence. MM. Dufresne de Saint-Léon and de Talleyrand were indicted. I escaped the same fate because I was in a position to defend myself, and had the courage to do so—not an easy thing in a large suspicious assembly difficult to turn when reports of this sort come and mislead or engage its attention.

But it is not for me at all to judge or pronounce upon the justice of these charges, and I therefore revert to the very extraordinary events which happened during my presidency. Some relate to the affair of the King, and others to the intrigues of the Commune of Paris. In addition, I had to do with a very unfortunate and very estimable man who was accused.

Acquittal of M. de Sainte-Foy, accused of having been concerned in the Court Conspiracy of the 10th of August.

The countless papers relating to the correspondence with departments or ministers reached the president of the Convention every day. He had to read them, and return them to their various destinations—to the bureau and to the different committees. In this correspondence I was much struck by a letter which General Dumouriez wrote to the president, and which was dated from Belgium. It related to the events of the 10th of August, and justified one of the general's friends who, since that date, had been in the prisons of the Conciergerie. This letter was placed among my private papers, or in my presidential portfolio, or passed into the hands of the six secretaries. But fortunately my very good memory was so strongly impressed by General Dumouriez' letter, and more

especially by a small note from M. de Sainte-Foy, which was enclosed in that of the general, that I was able to dictate the contents almost word for word. Indeed, a few days after receiving these two letters, I received at the house of M. de Savalette where I lodged, in the Rue St. Honoré, a visit of a very devoted agent of M. de Sainte-Foy. I had never seen or known either one or the other. This agent told me that M. de Sainte-Foy was unhappy and ill in the prisons of the Conciergerie, and that he had received a letter from General Dumouriez, who informed him that he had sent his original letter of the first days of the month of August to the Convention. He asked me if I remembered having seen the general's letter, or that of his friend, and he urgently begged me to seek for it among my papers and in the desks of the secretary of the Convention. I promised to do so, at the same time asking him to reassure M. de Sainte-Foy of the care with which I would conduct the search which concerned the life of such an unhappy man. Moreover, I informed him that I perfectly recollected the two letters and their contents, and that if necessary, and if the tribunal authorised it, I could give written or verbal testimony on the point.

Dumouriez's letter requested the president of the Convention[1] to forward to the president of the Paris tribunal, who was judging the matters relative to the 10th of August, the letter which M. de Sainte-Foy had written to him a few days before the 10th of

[1] I had been closely connected with Dumouriez in Paris during the Constituent Assembly, and I had cultivated his acquaintance until 1792. Knowing me well, he applied to me to save his good friend M. de Sainte-Foy.

August. The letter written by M. de Sainte-Foy to Dumouriez stated among other things that the obstinate people at the castle considered it necessary to assume the offensive, that he for his part held quite a contrary opinion, and that he had done all he could to dissuade them from any attack upon the people—an attack which they were bound to repent in view of the state of public opinion.

The trial of M. de Sainte-Foy had already begun, and witnesses were called and heard daily. The agent of M. de Sainte-Foy came to inform me that his counsel had told him that not only would my deposition suffice, but that it would have great weight in a matter of this sort, owing to my reputation for patriotism and veracity. I offered to go and give evidence upon the facts as I remembered them. The next day I received a notice appointing noon of that day for me to give evidence before the judges and jury. I appointed a substitute in the president's chair, announcing to the Convention the legitimate motive for my absence. It applauded my purpose, and I reached the Palace of Justice at midday. I was soon admitted to the court, presided over by an upright and wise man, and a friend of justice, whom I had known in Paris during the Constituent Assembly—M. Paré, who afterwards became for two years Minister of the Interior.

Nothing is more imposing than a criminal court and a jury about to deliver judgment on the life and honour of men. I was interrogated by the president, and, after the usual formula addressed to witnesses, I was asked if I knew the accused. I turned and beheld him for the first time. He was an old man with a handsome face; his grave, delicate features

were imposing, and his brow lofty; the assurance of an innocent man was manifest in his face and attitude. I replied, "I see him now for the first time." "What do you know as to the part played by the accused in the events of the 10th of August?" "All I know is the acquaintance which my duties as President of the National Convention have given me with two letters: one from General Dumouriez, and the other which was enclosed written on a small double sheet by the same hand that had signed 'De Sainte-Foy.'"

I related the contents of these letters, giving all the details concerning them. When I had established the existence and the contents of these two letters, I was again questioned by two jurors, who seemed to entertain doubts and suppositions as to what I might have read and what I had narrated. It appeared, however, that my answers succeeded in satisfying them, and I left the court. The accused, in gratitude, saluted me in such a touching and noble manner that I shall never forget it. Ah, how pathetic is the sensitiveness of an innocent prisoner who sees himself supported and defended!

Since that time I have seen M. Izquierdo, who told me in 1806 that M. de Sainte-Foy, his friend, had several times declared to him that he owed his life to me. M. de Talleyrand, a friend of M. de Sainte-Foy, also heard him express himself in similar terms.

The King's Trial.

A much more extraordinary case, and one exercising the most terrible influence on the spirit and the fate of the nation, was about to be submitted to the judg-

ment of the representatives, who had neither desired nor provoked such a species of magistracy. It would have been a hundred times better if this matter had been settled by an appeal to civil war; but it was the destiny of the Convention to be forced by its mandate and by the imminence of anarchy, as much as by the threats of foreign war, to terminate the struggle imprudently brought about between the people and the King, between public opinion and the monarchy.

By what fatality was it, under my presidency, that Louis XVI. should have been questioned on the various counts of the indictment communicated to the Convention in a detailed report of the Legislative Assembly? The case of the King was placed on the order of the day, and it was announced on the part of the committee that was invested with the right to seek for all proofs and to collect all the documents in this strange case, in which the conduct of the English might well have alienated and disgusted us. But my perilous and painful position and the excited state of public opinion were such that, being president, I could neither decline the sad duty of interrogating the King nor even let it be suspected that that inevitable function was disagreeable to my heart, and accorded ill with my character. I have never been present at any judgment as magistrate although I have for twelve years held a commission as magistrate. I have always preferred, from natural inclination, the honour of defending the accused to the distasteful task of judging them. But the fatal day arrived; I proceeded to the Assembly at ten o'clock, and sought to induce the excited and indignant spirits to control their feelings, and to appear impassive and

inclined to justice. Numerous reports were received at the secretaries' office announcing that the effervescence was very great on all the boulevards from the Temple to the gate of the Feuillants. Other reports stated that the King's life was in danger, especially in the Place Vendôme, where the assemblage of people was more numerous and more exasperated. Towards eleven o'clock I sent for M. Pouchard, commander of the Guard of the Convention, and M. Santerre, commander-in-chief of the Paris National Guard. I informed them of the reports which had just been handed to the secretaries and president concerning the safety of Louis XVI., and I gave them an express order to take all the measures in their power to answer for the life of the King, and to prevent his person from being insulted by the actions or words of any seditious persons. "*You will answer for the King with your heads*," I said to them; "*you, M. le Commandant of the Paris Guard, from the Temple to the door of the Assembly; and you, M. le Commandant of the Guard of the Convention, from the door of the Assembly until the return of the King to that door, and the handing of his person to the commander of the National Guard.*"

The orders were very punctually carried out. Everything was quiet, and, about half-past twelve, the King appeared at the bar of the Convention. The officers of the staff and Commander Pouchard, as well as Commander Santerre, were behind him.

Before his arrival, there were several noisy demonstrations of disapproval on several untimely and imprudent motions of order which had been made. Cheers were raised from some quarters, while the occupants of other parts of the House shouted. About

noon I thought it expedient to direct the minds of those present in another direction and to induce a better disposition in the galleries. I rose, and, after a moment of silence, I called upon the numbers of citizens of all classes who filled the hall to be calm and silent. "You owe respect to august misfortune and to a prisoner descended from the throne; the eyes of France are on you as well as the attention of Europe and the judgment of posterity. If, what I cannot expect or anticipate, signs of disapproval or murmurs are manifested or heard in the course of this long sitting, I shall be obliged to clear the galleries immediately. National justice must not be affected by any outside influence."

The effect of my speech was as sudden as it was efficacious. The sitting lasted until seven o'clock in the evening, and in that space of time not a murmur, not a movement was noticeable in the entire hall.

Several persons of various political opinions, and even several royalists whom I knew, complimented me that evening and the next day on the energy and wisdom which I had displayed, as well as on my manner of presiding, which had commanded respect for misfortune. M. de Malesherbes, among others, was extremely touched by it, telling me so two days later through M. Daure, my uncle and his friend, who saw him frequently when he was in Paris.

Louis XVI. appeared at the bar, calm, simple, and noble, as he had always appeared to me at Versailles, when I saw him in 1788 for the first time, and when I was sent to him, at the time of the States-General and the Constituent Assembly, as a member of various deputations.

I was seated like all the members of the Assembly. The King alone stood at the bar, as well as the officers of the staff and the two commanders, who took their stand behind him. Republican as I was, I nevertheless found it very unbecoming, and even painful to support, to see Louis XVI., who had convened the States-General, and doubled the number of deputies of the Commons, brought thus before those same Commons, there to be questioned as a prisoner. This feeling oppressed me several times, and, although I was well aware that I was severely observed by the Spartan deputies of the Left, who asked for nothing better than to see me at fault to do me the injury of demanding that I should be superseded as president, I nevertheless ordered two attendants, who were near me, to carry an armchair to Louis XVI. at the bar. The order was immediately carried out. Louis XVI. seemed sensible of it, and his eyes looking towards me thanked me a hundredfold for a just action and a delicate attention, which I included in the scope of my duties.

Nevertheless, the King remained standing with noble self-possession. He did not for one instant lose the dignity of the throne, and at the same time did not seem to remember his power. Then I thought it due before beginning to interrogate him, to send one of the ushers to request him to be seated.

In seeing this communication which had twice passed between the president and the accused, the deputies of the Left, suspicious as revolutionaries, appeared by several slight murmurs to disapprove of these communications through the intermediary of the attendant, who went from the president's chair to

the bar. One of these deputies, more irritable and more defiant than the others, Bourdon of the Oise, who had been seen covered with blood on the day of the 10th of August, when he fought vigorously, personally attacked me by means of a resolution. He held that the president should remain as impassive as the Convention, and that it was extraordinary and even unbecoming to see communications passing between the accused and the president. The feelings of members were ready to kindle, and I felt that if I let this resolution be submitted to discussion I should no longer be master of the Assembly. From that moment all dignity would be lost, public tranquillity inside and outside the Assembly might be violently compromised, and the result of that sitting, which it would perhaps be impossible or dangerous to renew, would be null.

I asked leave to address the Assembly to explain the motives for these communications, which did not extend beyond the simple considerations due to every defendant, even in the ordinary courts. I must say to the credit of the Left, whose chance imputations and severe censure I feared, that as soon as I had explained the facts relative to the chair I had sent to the accused, and the request that he would be seated, calmness and confidence were quite restored.

Two members of the committee charged to deal with the documents and the examination of the case then handed me the report drawn up by the committee *on the questions which I should put to the accused*. Everything was written by the committee, even to the forms of the interrogatory. In running rapidly over them, the first words struck me: *Louis Capet, the*

French nation accuses you, etc. I had known since the beginning of the Revolution that the historical sobriquet given in the tenth century to Hugh when he seized the throne of the Carlovingians, was very distasteful to Louis XVI. I took upon myself to suppress the name of Capet in the formula of the interrogatory, a name which recurred with every head of the indictment. No one in the Assembly noticed the suppression. Louis XVI. alone was conscious of it, as he himself subsequently informed us.[1]

Louis XVI., remaining seated, replied very laconically to each question, either invoking the constitution which made the ministry alone responsible, or casting upon each minister the responsibility for the different acts or deeds included in the counts of the indictment.

There ended, very fortunately, my painful task. My mind was at ease and delivered of a heavy burden when I read the last article of this long interrogatory.

Immediately after this the two members of the committee formed to examine the case brought to the secretaries' bureau a quantity of papers found in the iron chest at the Tuileries, of which a large portion were in the writing of Louis XVI. The remainder were documents exchanged between Louis XVI. and his councils, ministers, or courtiers who communicated secretly with him on the affairs of the State and the events of the Revolution.

M. Valazé, one of the six secretaries, undertook to hand the various documents to Louis XVI. one by

[1] See the conversation of Louis XVI. at the Temple with Cambacérès, who was sent by the Convention to communicate to him the decree which gave him the choice of three defenders.

one, in order that he might admit or deny their authenticity. M. Valazé, although he was regarded in the Convention as a royalist, approached the bar, sat down within the hall, and with a disdainful, or, at any rate, hardly courteous air, turned his back to Louis XVI., and handed him over his shoulder the documents and other writings relating to the case.

I confess that I could not endure this almost insulting manner towards misfortune, and I thought it my duty to put an end to this indelicate proceeding by sending an attendant to M. Valazé to request him to act in a less harsh and offensive manner towards an illustrious prisoner. M. Valazé immediately rose, turned towards Louis XVI., and, in a manner more worthy the Convention and the King, presented the documents to him with a consideration which was felt and appreciated by Louis XVI., who by his looks and a slight movement of the head seemed to thank me.

Ah! how many times since his trial have I thought with touching interest of that sitting of the Convention in which I questioned him; I, an obscure citizen of the Pyrenees; I, who had seen him on his throne in August, 1788, when he received with such majesty the envoys of a prince as unfortunate as himself—Tippoo Sahib, Sultan of the kingdom of Visapore, in India. When I think of the spirit of the century, of the opinion of the departments which were irritated, of the excitement in Paris which followed the recollection of the 10th of August; when I think of what public liberty imposed as a duty, I am tranquil regarding my opinion and my vote; but when I see the deluge of calamities that followed that disastrous epoch, the divisions which prevailed among the representatives of the same nation, the violent and

inauspicious usurpation of public powers by an ambitious foreigner, a ferocious conqueror, and the secret enemy of France and the French, then my soul puts forth regrets for the loss of Louis XVI.—regrets all the better founded from the fact that during the first fifteen years of his reign, from the sweetness of his disposition and his natural goodness, he was preferable to any other, and was worth more than all his race without any exception.

At last, about seven o'clock in the evening, that painful and extraordinary sitting terminated. Louis XVI. was placed in charge of the armed force of the Convention and of Paris, which was responsible for him, and justified the confidence of the Assembly.

Petitioners arrive to demand the Death of Louis XVI.

I thought I had got clear of all the difficulties of that presidency which I had neither desired nor sought. It was the decree of Providence to expose me one day to more calumnies and to keener hatreds because I had presided over that famous sitting and *questioned the King*. I had never been able to endure unmoved the injustice of men; but when Heaven ordains, my soul obeys and my heart submits without murmuring. I believed, I say, that I had reached the end of that gloomy fortnight, when the Sunday following, at an evening sitting (which was attended as a rule by very few deputies), one of the secretaries informed me during my dinner that a great meeting of petitioners was expected, and that it would be necessary for me to proceed early to the Assembly. I went before eight o'clock. There was, in fact, in the petition hall a great concourse of women and children, having at their head

several members of the Commune of Paris. I asked the petitioners, through one of the secretaries, the object of their petitions, and arranged their order with the bureau.

The persons first introduced brought petitions relating to private interests. At half-past nine the bar was obstructed by women and children holding and waving in their hands torn garments and strips of shirts and cloth covered with blood. The Assembly seemed terrified and indignant, so revolting were these proceedings, which were suitable rather to the *English stage*. The first murmurs on the part of the deputies, although few were present at the evening sitting, were followed by a tumultuous movement in the galleries, which already took a very active share in a petition the object of which was still unknown, although the hideous preparations were well calculated to grip the imagination.

At last an orator with the voice of a Stentor presented himself at the head of these women and children, who were in attitudes of grief, misery, and despair. They invoked the shades of the victims of the 10th of August, declaring that they were the children and widows of those courageous defenders of their country. They did not confine themselves to demanding consolation and help, they called for the prompt punishment of the author of the 10th of August; in the name of so many unfortunate victims they demanded the death of Louis XVI.

Such was in substance the petition presented by this *Stentor of the Commune*.

His speech was full of that revolutionary energy and of that popular style which is calculated to inflame

people's minds, especially when joined to the dangerous effects produced by that species of dramatic representation and by that spectacle of rags and blood-stained garments.

One calls to mind the similar effects produced at Rome when the expiring Lucretia was shown to the people, and especially when Antony waved the blood-stained robe of Cæsar in the Forum.

The galleries cheered this petition with a violent unanimity which was terrifying. The first excitement having subsided, I replied with firmness and almost in these very terms to these unfortunate people who had been led to such a pitch of agitation and public effervescence: "The sad events of the 10th of August cannot be forgotten by the Convention which was convened on account of those very events. It will give its aid and consolation to the unfortunate families which suffered losses on that day. But your misfortunes do not give you the right to *influence* the judgment at which it should arrive with the calmness and dignity which are consonant with national justice. We are the representatives of the entire French nation, and Paris is not France. We shall do our duty without being excited by any other sentiment than love of our country. Leave it to the National Convention to render justice, and especially to consider the relief to be given to the unfortunate families of the petitioners and of the victims of the 10th of August."

My reply did not seem to have a good effect on the people in the galleries, who had expected another result. Fortunately two other petitioners effected a truce to the vexatious impressions produced by the speech of the Parisian orator, and I ended the sitting.

Society of the Jacobins—Commune of Paris.[1]

The Commune of Paris and the Club of the Jacobins were conjointly responsible for all the exaggerated methods and ambitious projects during the revolution of 1793. These two revolutionary bodies had united at the time of the events of the 10th of August, when they were of service to the public cause. But having grown powerful and exclusive, they conceived the plan of seizing supreme power—the one by publicity and the violence of the opinions in the sittings of the Jacobins, the other by the armed force of the sections of Paris and the artillery of the National Guard, the general command of which was in the gift of the Commune.

It was at one of the sittings of the Jacobins that the resolution was passed to have the representative Paganel brought to trial *for having called the attention of the National Convention to the ambitious aims of the Commune of Paris.*

Cambacérès goes and announces to Louis XVI. that he is granted the Choice of Three Defenders.

The next day, the Convention having issued a decree which gave Louis XVI. the choice of three defenders, Cambacérès came to the office and seemed to wish to be the bearer of this favourable decree to the prison of the Temple. I appointed him, with two other members of the office, to carry out this mission immediately. Cambacérès returned from the Temple at half-past five in the evening, and went to

[1] Inserted fragment.

dine with me at M. Dupin's, deputy for the Aisne, at whose house we met very frequently. During the dinner Cambacérès related to us the manner in which he had discharged his mission. On entering Louis XVI.'s apartment, he said to him, "Louis Capet, I come on the part of the Convention . . ." Louis XVI. interrupted him, saying, "I do not call myself Capet, but Louis." Cambacérès proceeded in an official tone: "Louis Capet, I come to notify to you the decree giving you the choice of three defenders." "I repeat," said Louis XVI. "that my name is not Capet. President Barère in the Convention never called me anything but Louis, and that is my name." This remark, thus heard from the lips of Cambacérès himself, proved to me that Louis XVI. had been fully sensible of all the degrees of my just proceedings in regard to him.

Visit of MM. de Malesherbes and Target.

M. de Malesherbes and M. Target, appointed by the King as his counsel, came to consult me and to know whether they should accept this duty, which to them seemed perilous, but which was so honourable! M. Target came first. I replied to him that he must accept, and that it was the first duty of an advocate. He dwelt upon his weakness and ill health, to excuse himself for being unable to undertake such a difficult task. It was impossible for me to overcome his obstinacy. Two days later M. de Malesherbes, who had informed M. Daure, my uncle and an old friend of his, called on me in the Rue St. Honoré. One may imagine with what distinction I received the honourable visit of that great minister, the worthy heir of the virtues

of the Lamoignon family. In offering him a chair I said: "Permit me to remain standing in the presence of the upright minister and courageous magistrate." He seemed sensible of my manner of describing his public life. I told him how happy I was at seeing the humane administrator who had thrown open the State prisons and drawn up suitable remonstrances in favour of the rights of the people. "I come," said he, "in accordance with the good advice of M. Daure to concert with you in connection with the choice which Louis XVI. has made of me as his defender." "Sir," said I, "if I were not a member of the Convention, or if, being a member of that assembly, I could be the defender of the King, I would accept such a noble function with all my heart. It is the triumph of public defence and the highest occasion for an advocate of misfortune." "I thought so. My family owes so much gratitude to the Bourbons. I owe much to Louis XVI., and your opinion decides my action in regard to the Convention to which I shall write and accept. At my age it is rather difficult and even sad, but all you have said decides me." We then spoke of public affairs. "They are very embarrassed," he said to me; "but, since you have done so much to obtain a Republic, you must adhere to it if that is possible." These were the final words of that great magistrate, who had always loved public liberty.

Madame de Genlis returns from England.

Severe laws had just been promulgated against the *émigrés* who had joined the foreign troops that had devastated the frontier and Champagne. Madame de Genlis, who had left in 1791 to travel in England with

Mademoiselle d'Orléans and several other persons attached to her, hastened to return to Paris to demand an exception in her favour. She had left France, like Mademoiselle d'Orléans, with passports, and that at a time when people were far from thinking of war with the Northern powers. This demand was just. I went to see Madame de Genlis, at Belle-Chasse, two days after her arrival. I was astonished at finding M. Guadet there; but I was told that he had been engaged by M. de Sillery, who knew him, to undertake to ask the Convention for an exception to the decrees of emigration in favour of Madame de Genlis and of Mademoiselle d'Orléans, whose father was a member of the Assembly. M. Guadet and I undertook to demand this exception, after each of us had consulted the opinion of his colleagues. It was decided to postpone this demand because people's minds were still too excited regarding the laws on emigration. In the meantime Madame de Genlis and Mademoiselle d'Orléans, with their party, were obliged to return to the northern frontier to await the decree which, as a special exception, would have recalled them. General Dumouriez, in whose army the three young Orléans princes were serving with zeal, talent and distinction, received Madame de Genlis and the sister of the young princes very favourably. They lived at Mons, where was celebrated the marriage of the amiable and beautiful Mademoiselle Pamela with the noble and patriotic Irishman, Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

Why my Enemies called me the "Guardian of Pamela."

When it was sought, in 1794, to render me unpopular at the Jacobin Club, I was called, in the

documents and in speeches from the tribune, the "Guardian of Pamela," and I was treated as an Orleanist. From the 15th of March, 1793, that was a title to banishment. According to my custom, I made no reply. I have always despised the calumnies and calumniators of Paris. They have doubtless done me much harm, but I know that in Paris people only listen to the accusation, and that they can never be made to hear a justification. *Calumny is the patrimony of the Parisians.* As for the title of guardian, it should be known that in 1791 the Duke of Orleans, wishing to make a present to Mademoiselle Pamela (for whom he had a great affection) of an income of 6,000 francs settled upon her, and also a life annuity of 1,500 francs as the price of the library bought of Madame de Genlis, the notary Rouen told the Duke of Orleans' solicitor that Mademoiselle Pamela was a minor, and that she must have an official guardian. One day, when in the company of Madame de Genlis, that lady spoke to me of the necessity of having a guardian for the beautiful Pamela. Several deputies jested about this dangerous guardianship; but the demand was serious, and Mademoiselle Pamela had to make an immediate choice. After some ceremony and delay, she chose me for her guardian from among twelve or fifteen deputies who were that day in the company of Madame de Genlis. It was only to fulfil a simple formality in affixing my signature to two documents. I accepted with pleasure, and signed the two documents at M. Rouen's. That is how I was for a few instants, and to fulfil a simple formality, the guardian of the most amiable, the best trained, and the most accomplished person I have ever known. I did not see her again

after the time (December, 1792) when she returned to England with Madame de Genlis, and proceeded immediately to Belgium.

Committee of General Defence.

Events quickly succeeded one another in the war in Belgium. Our generals made that war resemble a mere military promenade, especially after the battle of Jemappes, where the bravery of the national volunteers, and principally those of Paris, carried the formidable redoubts by main force. During this time the sittings of the Committee of General Defence, which were being held at the Bernardine convent, occupied the attention of the principal deputies. This committee, of which too little has been said, had nevertheless rendered great services: first, before the 10th of August, and afterwards during the months of November and December, 1792, until the formation of the first Committee of Public Safety on the 5th of April, 1793. The Committee of General Defence was occupied in maintaining our southern frontiers against the attacks of the Spaniards, and it regulated as far as was possible the movements of the armies and contributions of war in Belgium.

If the committee had only given its attention to these two objects, it would have done much good; but in the month of December it summoned all the generals to Paris, and left everything with the armies at a standstill. At last it slowly prepared the armaments and provisions for the great war which threatened us in the spring of 1793. What still more contributed to nullify its operations was a very excited and complicated discussion regarding the correspondence between

the generals and the committee, and especially regarding the secret understanding which was alleged to have existed for several months with General Dumouriez, who had the principal forces at his disposal.

There was then started in the Committee of General Defence a most lengthy and animated discussion between two parties in the Convention, which were forced to expose themselves by mutual accusations, which made us feel the need of removing them from the general direction of affairs.

These two parties may be described as follows: Danton and Lacroix were the heads of one, and corresponded with Dumouriez, or rather sought to direct him in his military movements. The other party was more numerous, had more oratorical talent, but less skill and political intrigue. Gensonné and Brissot were at the head of all the Girondins and their partisans. They were, so to speak, the heirs of the views and methods of this committee, whereas Danton and Lacroix were new comers.

Several members of the Convention, on being informed of these divisions in the defence committee, were fearful of the results, and demanded that fresh deputies should be introduced to neutralise the dangerous influence of the two parties. Six new members were appointed to hear all the charges relating to the correspondence of Gensonné and Danton with General Dumouriez. Guyton-Morveau and I were among the new members of the committee. I confess that fifteen or twenty sittings were very unprofitably employed in showing that Danton and Lacroix wished to apply, for their own exclusive benefit, all the profits and

advantages of the sudden conquest of the Netherlands, whereas Gensonné and his party sought, for their part, to enlist the victor of Jemappes on their side and under their sole influence.

These violent discussions, which took place in the midst of the committee during the evening sittings, brought to the front two powerful interests, as hatred and intrigue may do when seconded by some talent. The interests of Danton and Lacroix were sustained by the Commune of Paris, the Cordeliers' Club, and the armed force which was entrusted in 1793 to Henriot, an adventurer capable of anything. The interests of Gensonné and Brissot were supported by the departments and by many members of the Convention who hated the Paris deputies. These two interests could not fail to join issue. They fought secretly in the Committee of General Defence and publicly in the Convention. They attacked one another even more violently on the 31st of May, 1793. But on the one hand, Belgium was the first object of Danton's covetousness, and to acquire wealth and become master of the revolution in Paris that of Lacroix; while, on the other hand, the principal object on the part of Gensonné and Brissot was to have at their disposal a general and an army, then to organise France into a confederation like the United States, and thus to neutralise the gigantic and corrupt force of the capital.

In fact, at all periods since 1791, we have had a caste more dangerous than that of the priests and nobles, namely, the modern caste of *profiters by revolutions*—ambitious men who never changed their minds or principles of conduct, who always sought to place

themselves in the train of celebrated, fortunate and enterprising generals, in order that they might, with the assistance of these military men, whom they transformed into puppets of power, seize the public treasure and the control of various honorary and lucrative posts.

In the final sittings of the Committee of General Defence, in the month of February, Gensonné found himself compelled to show his correspondence, which was as voluminous as it was obscure and enigmatical. It was written in a manner to be understood by the person to whom it was addressed, but not by those into whose hands it might fall. In this correspondence was visible the desire to dominate, to intrigue, to direct, to ensure the acquisition of an army and a general against possible events on the part of the enterprising Commune of Paris. But it was all so personal, so strictly confined to the Girondins, that public opinion turned against them, and the committee was from that time discredited as powerless for public defence, and exposed to all the suspicions of an assembly naturally distrustful and always divided.

The events of the 31st of May, organised by Danton and Lacroix and the Commune of Paris, proved from that time that the foresight of Gensonné was wise, but that it was immature and ill-directed. He only succeeded in getting himself suspected by the Convention, hated by Danton's and Lacroix's party, and powerless with the generals, especially Dumouriez, who was watched by Danton and his colleagues.

As the danger became daily more imminent, the Committee of General Defence sent several generals to their armies and summoned General Servan from

Toulouse to determine the degree of danger incurred by the southern departments, which were threatened by the armaments of the King of Spain. M. de Beurnonville was appointed Minister of War in place of Servan, who had become general of the army of the Western Pyrenees. Its headquarters were established at Toulouse.

M. Servan advised a policy of delay and no declaration of war, which I had been entrusted to make by the committee. I assented to this delay with all the more satisfaction because the war could only bring calamities on my native country, and to abstain from making a report on this war, which had unfortunately become necessary, was at least to delay the evils which threatened the Pyrenees.

I remember that Brissot was very eager that I should make the report on the declaration of war with Spain. I did not know what to think of this eagerness on the part of a deputy who had no local or political interest, or at least none of those which might be avowed for the welfare of the State. In fact, it would have been desirable not to increase the number of enemies of France, then in so unfortunate a plight, and we ought to have endeavoured to fight only against the allied powers of the North and their paymaster, the English government.

Later I received the order of the committee to make the report; but, knowing through M. Servan that nothing was prepared for defence either at Bayonne or Perpignan, I slackened my work, and it was only in the month of March that, compelled by the Committee and the Convention, I made this report.

Plot to place a well-known Prince at the Head of Power.

About the 15th of March, 1793, the public mind became more agitated than ever, and people spoke of nothing but exterminating the Convention. The King no longer existed. A party, secretly armed, hoped to be able to place a well-known prince at the head of power. But the courage and bold front of the Assembly saved it from this fresh attack, at the head of which was a certain Fournier, the American, well known in connection with the murders of Orleans and Versailles. I remember having seen him after midnight, on the 15th of March, enter the hall of the Convention very furiously, and there await the signal which no one dared give or carry out. We learned next day many details which served to thwart these violent plans. Everything in this plot, which was hatched in Paris, was combined with the movement of the armies of the North; for about the same time General Dumouriez allowed himself to be beaten at Neerwinden, where he had imprudently disposed his troops as if by design.

Several days later I dined with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Lebrun, and I was placed next to General Valence, who was about to start to join the army of Belgium, of which he was to command the right wing. General Valence was so profoundly sad and silent that I could not avoid expressing my astonishment, thinking that it was honourable to go and fight for one's country with troops already victorious. "I am sad," said he, "because I do not look for success. I have an evil foreboding regarding our military affairs." He undoubtedly knew more facts than I. He left. First, Miranda let himself be beaten at the head of the left wing. M. de Valence was no

more successful with the other wing; and the troops of Dumouriez's army fled as far as the citadel of Lille, from which they were repulsed, together with their generals.

The Sittings of the Committee of General Defence become Public.

The inconceivable flight of that fine army, which had always been victorious, excited public distrust, and led to the charges of the Assembly against General Dumouriez. In this time of crisis and treason, the Committee of Defence deemed it expedient to remove its sittings to the apartments of the Tuileries, and it adopted the resolution of deliberating every evening under the eyes of all the members of the Convention who wished to be present. The sittings (end of March) were extremely numerous, and lasted far into the night. Everyone contributed to throw his share of light on the situation, while several brought into play their most dangerous passions. This was the case with Marat and several other irascible and suspicious deputies.

I had been appointed president of the Committee of General Defence when it was established at the Tuileries, Cambacérès being the secretary. The ministers were obliged to attend every evening to communicate the state of their labours and the needs of their departments, in order to prove their zeal and to place themselves out of reach of the attacks of malevolence or perfidy.

One evening Marat took up a position in front of the president. He waited until the attendance was large to break out in reproaches against Beurnonville,

the Minister of War, whom he accused of treason and of having an understanding with Dumouriez. All the members of the committee had reasons for thinking differently, and the threats and insults of the senseless Marat were listened to with composure. When he had finished, I took up the defence of Beurnonville's conduct, whom I then pledged to reply by specific facts as to the means adopted for public defence. It was heard and then refuted by Marat, who, seeing that the general opinion disapproved of his odious attack upon a new minister hardly settled in his office, and at a moment when we had need of every method for the defence of the country, brusquely withdrew, threatening us.

Marat was a former horse doctor of M. d'Artois. Everyone distrusted his patriotic zeal, which was attributed to other causes, and thought that his revolutionary follies were paid for by the enemy. There are men whose natures can only be explained by venality, and acts whose prime cause can only be discerned in the factions, either at home or abroad, which set in motion things and persons apparently the most contrary and opposed.

Revolutionary Tribunal.

The establishment of a revolutionary tribunal had already been proposed to the Convention. I opposed it, as may be seen by reference to the *Moniteur* of that time. I even carried opposition to the establishment of this odious tribunal so far as to appear in the tribune with Sallust's work on the war of Catiline, a book in which that honest historian powerfully describes the dangers of such tribunals, which begin by attacking

and punishing several guilty parties, and finish by ruining the best citizens.

On the motion of Jean Debry revolutionary committees had also been established—frightful institutions, which, by their excesses and abuses, contributed more than any other institution of that epoch to provoke hatred of the revolution and to deprive France of liberty.

Observe that the tribunal and the committees were decreed by the Convention on the simple motion of its members long before there was a Committee of Public Safety. Then there existed only a Committee of General Defence, which had no share in these deplorable institutions.

The organisation of the revolutionary tribunal, instituted for the trial of those accused of conspiracy (*Moniteur*, 13th of March, 1793), was decreed in the sitting of the 10th of March. Lesage, of the Eure-et-Loire, submitted the plan of organisation. Vergniaud said:

"When you are asked to vote for the establishment of an inquisition a thousand times more formidable than that of Venice, we declare that we would rather die than consent to it. I demand that the two bills presented by Lesage and Lindet be discussed immediately." Vergniaud's presentiments were correct, and few deputies had foresight in this deplorable eagerness to decree such a tyrannical judicial institution. Cambon, although very revolutionary, spoke against this tribunal, whose power would be confided to nine persons, perhaps nine intriguers who might sell themselves and could never be stopped by anything. The Assembly itself might become its victim; and what would be the end of the tyranny of nine persons,

although appointed by the Convention ? How could one avoid being alarmed at seeing five persons sufficient to bring charges, to control the procedure, and apply the penalty as was suggested by Lindet ?

Arrest of the Duke of Orleans.

After the disasters in Belgium suspicion fell upon the Orleans party of wishing to overthrow the Convention in order to set up another power. The Duke of Orleans, M. de Sillery, M. de la Touche-Tréville, and the young princes were arrested, as well as the author of the "Liaisons Dangereuses." The young Duke of Orleans had already emigrated with MM. de Valence and Dumouriez after the affair of Neerwinden and the closing of the gates of Lille. The old Duke of Orleans and his two sons were transferred to a fortified castle at Marseilles. I was charged to interrogate them on the very night on which the Committee of Defence had ordered their arrest. I was astonished by all that was passing, and especially at the arrest of M. de la Touche-Tréville, who was a good and loyal gentleman, attached, no doubt, to the Duke of Orleans, but incapable of any action against the country. M. de Sillery had seemed to me no more than an old sybarite full of character and wit. As for the young princes, they were of an age when people hardly concern themselves with political matters. I had been two or three times during the winter to take supper at Raincy with the Duke of Orleans, with M. Alquier, and two or three other deputies, and there had never been a question of any political combination or of any of the interests which were agitating the National Convention. What should or could I do in the midst of these events more powerful and more imperious than all the

powers of the members of the Convention? To me the Duke of Orleans had never appeared ambitious; intriguers might be so for him and compromise his name. But to me there appeared nothing but the danger of bearing a certain name when the people set up a republic.

First Committee of Public Safety.

On the 5th of April the Convention formed the first Committee of Public Safety, composed of nine members, to supersede the Committee of General Defence, which was ineffective and consisted of too many members. The ministerial departments were recast and their powers limited in various ways. I was appointed member of the first committee with MM. Cambon, Guyton-Morveau, Treilhard, Danton, Delmas, Lacroix, and Lindet.

The deplorable state of the armies of the North, after the battle of Neerwinden, left the frontier almost unprotected; we had nothing but disasters to anticipate, and to announce the capture of our towns to the Convention.

Two incidents only, which are quite unknown, because those inside the committee were alone cognisant of them, deserve to be mentioned here. All the rest comes within the province of the tribune and the *Moniteur*.

M. de Staël in Accord with Danton proposes an Alliance with Sweden—Advance of Funds for this Affair.

The first of these facts is relative to Sweden, or rather to M. de Staël-Holstein, the ambassador of that power. This diplomatist (in accord with Danton)

presented himself before the committee, to propose an alliance with Sweden to the Convention, which offered, he said, to supply us with a certain number of ships of the line, frigates, and small war vessels, with all their crews, to unite with the French fleet, and co-operate with it against England. The offer was seductive, but its execution seemed problematical, or even illusory. The committee adjourned all the proposals of M. de Staël for a fuller examination. The report was to be made by Danton and myself, as we were entrusted with the direction of foreign affairs in the committee. Danton suggested to me that we should examine this affair as soon as possible, and with great care. Although my colleague had an air of candour and openness in affairs, I distrusted him, knowing that he was very fond of the finances, and wishing to have nothing to do with that delicate branch, in which one may be very easily suspected of corruption and venality. I was not deceived. Two days later Danton came and spoke to me in favour of the proposal of M. de Staël, which he considered wonderfully favourable to France, at a moment when she had not a single supporter, and not an ally in Europe. "The twelve or fifteen millions which Sweden," said he, "asks for this naval armament, and for its co-operation, certainly require that we should bargain a little with the ambassador regarding this sum which he demands in cash, since there is nothing in the Treasury but paper money. But there is something to be done with Sweden, and we must not let this opportunity of obtaining a natural and useful ally slip." "I am not of your opinion," I replied; "M. de Staël is the son-in-law of M. Necker, with whom he

continues to correspond at Coppet. It is known that M. Necker and his daughter, Madame de Staël, are much more English than French. This proposal for an alliance and naval co-operation for the sum of twelve millions, is a *fiscal speculation* rather than a diplomatic *operation*. I in no way disguise my thoughts from you. I am against this proposal. I will give this opinion this evening, in the committee, if you come there." I kept my word. M. de Staël was present. Danton came to the committee to hear me, and opposed me with general considerations. The committee postponed all the proposals of the Swedish ambassador. In fact, it had neither sufficient confidence in the proposal, nor sufficient funds at its disposal.

Several days passed, during which I heard no further mention of the matter. Danton came to me in the Assembly, and said he had considered the affair of Sweden, and that I was right; but that there remained a very simple means of ascertaining whether the execution of this naval co-operation was practicable within a fixed period; that in consequence we must be satisfied with allowing M. de Staël to return to Stockholm with the object of determining precisely the number and class of the vessels and frigates which Sweden could arm in a short time for the cause of the French Republic, and that the sum should be strictly fixed which France would give for the expenses of this naval co-operation. "In this case," said I to Danton, "M. de Staël has only to return to Sweden; it does not concern us any more until he returns with a categorical answer." "No doubt," replied Danton; "but we must advance him

600,000 francs for his journey, and to assist us in bringing the proposal which he has made to us to a successful issue at Stockholm." "I do not agree to any expense in this matter, nor to the making of any proposal. Speak to the committee yourself; if it is willing to give you a sum in advance to pay for the co-operation of the ambassador, the committee is responsible for it. Do not bring in my name in any way." Danton asked nothing better than not to have an adverse report. He took advantage of a moment when I was making reports to the Convention, and I learned next day that the committee, urged by Danton and M. de Staël, had charged the Minister for Foreign Affairs to pay to the latter one hundred thousand crowns for his journey and his negotiations in Sweden.

I told the committee that the stake was a hazardous one. M. de Staël and Danton received the hundred thousand crowns. M. de Staël left Paris, it is true, but he never got beyond the Lake of Geneva. He went to live at Coppet with his father-in-law, M. Necker, and not at Stockholm. Never again was a reference made to the negotiation of that pretended naval co-operation of Sweden. At Coppet M. de Staël constantly received diplomatic bulletins and secret intelligence of all that happened in Paris from that time (May, 1793) until the month of November, 1794, when M. de Staël returned from Coppet to Paris to follow the fresh events of the reaction which was to dishonour and overthrow the National Convention by its own hands.

31st of May—Danton, Lacroix, Robespierre, Hérault de Séchelles, Marat.

Before passing to the second incident, which occurred in the month of June, I must speak of that execrable 31st of May, which degraded the national representation for ever, divided the Convention into two very distinct and hostile parties, and gave the first idea of aiming at the inviolability of the deputies of the French people to military despotism.

The *Moniteur* reports the public facts. I shall only give the private facts which history has not divulged. I learned after the 31st of May, but too late, that Danton and Lacroix, although members of the Committee of Public Safety, had placed themselves at the head of this movement, which has been laid to the account of the Commune of Paris. They had written in the very committee-room, on the eve of the Communal rising, the petition which they caused to be forwarded to the attorney of the Commune, who dared to come and read it on the 31st of May at the bar of the Convention, while the Commandant Henriot was at the head of an armed force and forty-eight pieces of cannon of the sections of Paris. In that sitting the deputies seemed petrified; their tongues seemed paralysed. The entire party of the Left was in the secret. The Committee of Public Safety alone was ignorant whither they desired to lead us. In this doubt I ascended the tribune, firmly resolved to perish or to obtain the punishment of the Commandant Henriot, who supported by armed force such a violation of the rights of representation. I raised my voice against this public violence, and I called upon the Assembly to leave the house and place itself in front of that sacrilegious artillery led by criminals. The

Assembly was moved and indignant, and was on the verge of going. Then Robespierre entered the tribune and said to me in a low voice, "What are you doing? You are making nice mischief." This expression revealed to me the part that that hypocrite took in all that, without daring to show himself. "Oh, indeed," I said to him, loudly; "the mischief is not in the tribune, it is at the Carrousel; it is there." I pointed to the place where stood our assassins, and, resuming my address, I again endeavoured to induce the Convention to go, and, by its courageous presence, to neutralise the efforts of the seditious, and to accuse them face to face. It was then that I used the words for which I was so often reproached: "I demand the exemplary and instant punishment of that insolent soldier who dares to outrage and to violate the national representation." Unfortunately Hérault de Séchelles, a man devoid of character and completely under the influence of Danton, was president at that time. Nevertheless, he was forced to go and place himself at the head of the deputies who hastened to confront the batteries of the Commune at the Carrousel. Our presence stayed the hands of the gunners, who had their matches lighted. At this moment Hérault de Séchelles politely approached Henriot and asked him on behalf of the Convention the object of this military movement. Henriot replied that he came in the name of the people of Paris to demand the arrest and removal of thirty-two deputies, who formed a daily obstacle to the deliberations of the Assembly, and who opposed the public welfare. During this reply, one of Henriot's aides-de-camp, whom I had seen approaching Danton, whispered to him, as well as to Lacroix. I heard (as did also one of my

cousins, Hector B——, whom the rumour of danger had caused to hasten to my side in the Place du Carrousel) "It is all right. Things are going well"; and Danton shook the aide-de-camp's hand. Then Hérault said that the Assembly wished to separate, and that the gathering should disperse. Marat came forward—Marat, that atrocious aide-de-camp of Danton. He said that the Assembly, to prove that its liberty had not been violated, had only to walk in the Tuileries. The deputies went in a body to the various gates and exits. They found them occupied by Henriot's troops, with orders not to let anyone pass. Marat was triumphant and smiled like a tiger about to fall upon its prey. By his cries he forced the deputies to re-enter the hall; and thenceforth public liberty was lost.

Marat and Legendre, with several other Paris deputies, demanded that justice should be done to the petition of the people and the Commune, which had been read at the bar several hours previously. With threats and declamations they demanded the immediate arrest of the thirty-two deputies whose names appeared in the list of proscription read at the bar in the morning; that is to say, those who were called the Girondins. I then saw the Convention yielding to armed force, and teaching every general, chief, or adventurer, placed at the head of that force, that he might mutilate or destroy the national representation with impunity. I applied to a good many deputies, requesting them to unite with me in resisting these acts of public violence. Several replied to me that it was the Girondins, who, having made charges against Marat three months previously, and having exposed him to a public trial, had with their own hands destroyed

the inviolability of the national representation; that it was an inevitable misfortune, and that we should only endeavour to lessen it.

Danton offers himself as a Hostage to calm the Convention and the Departments.

The next day, in the committee, I attempted to mollify this Danton, the author of all these odious violations. I sought to inspire him with fear of the departments, which throughout the south would take up arms against the violence done to their deputies by those of Paris, well known as being the worst, most dangerous, and most hostile to the south of France and its energy. M. Garat, Minister of the Interior, was present at that scene, and strongly urged Danton to disavow the sitting of the previous day, and to calm the departments by some conciliatory measure. Then Danton, who had lucid intervals of good nature, and was, moreover, accused by his conscience of being the author of these proscriptions, cried, "All right! Let us offer the departments whose deputies are arrested on the demand of the people of Paris, let us offer them hostages, taken from the left of the Convention; and I will myself come forward as a hostage. I will give the first example." We took him at his word. Garat and I passed with him into the hall of the Committee of Public Safety. There we laid the proposals of Danton before our colleagues, as calculated to calm people's minds, either in the Convention or in the departments. As soon as the proposal had been adopted by the committee, I was charged to make the report. I wrote it out immediately, and called upon Danton to keep his word, and to follow me to the tribune, to

support the proposal for the decree regarding hostages. Danton came with me, as well as Garat. I then proposed this method, which I believed to be conciliatory, and which was, at least, a sort of guarantee for the lives of my unfortunate colleagues. My report was applauded by an assembly which no longer knew how to be quit of the shame of the 31st of May, and already foresaw all its melancholy consequences for public liberty. I declared that Danton had been the first to suggest the matter, and that he would be the first to support the proposal, by offering himself as a hostage. While I was making my report, Danton spoke (I saw him from the tribune) with several deputies of the Left, who had disapproved of this means of saving those whom they regarded as their enemies. Moreover, Danton, whom I forced to speak, was so cold and unconvincing that this measure did not attain the salutary object which had encouraged me to become its interpreter. I had no need of this last circumstance to judge of Danton's morality, whom the secret debates of the Committee of General Defence had sufficiently exposed.

I am accused of being a Girondin.

From that time I foresaw what would be the sad outcome of the 31st of May. I was myself accused of being a Girondin. It was the *audacious soldier* whom I had wished to have punished on that day who undertook the accusation against me on the 13th of June at the Jacobin Club. I was alluded to in several speeches or resolutions as the intimate friend of the Bordeaux deputies, in whose company, it is true, I found myself every day, either at Fonfrède's, or at

Vergniaud's, the most eloquent among them, whom I greatly loved and esteemed.

An English Spy.

The second curious incident which, as I have said, occupied the Committee of Public Safety, occurred at the beginning of June. It relates to a very dexterous spy sent by Mr. Pitt to Paris to investigate the condition of France and of public opinion, under colour of bringing before the Committee of Public Safety decisive proposals for arranging a general peace. These first proposals, which were announced to the committee by M. Lebrun, Minister for Foreign Affairs, did not inspire very great confidence. The committee did not wish to lose time in listening to a diplomatic spy, a man who by his appearance, his evasions, and his British subtleties did not offer strong guarantees. The committee referred the task of hearing this agent and of giving an account in writing of all the overtures made in Mr. Pitt's name to Cambon, Robert Lindet, and myself. The agent spoke at length. He resembled a very able lawyer well skilled in that legal chicanery which the English have introduced into diplomacy. We pressed him to present the list of proposals or conditions by which the cabinet of St. James' pretended to confer the benefits of general peace. Thus forced back into his political intrenchments, the British envoy demanded the recall of the French princes, the re-establishment of the clergy, nobility, tithes, feudal rights, parliaments, etc. Cambon became impatient at this category of rights and institutions which had been destroyed in 1789, and said to him with his ordinary

frankness: "Mr. Pitt simply asks of us a *counter-revolution*. You may tell him that, when he has conquered us, *we shall see*. In the meantime we break off all communications with an agent who proves his real mission to be that of an observer, by proposing to us things so inadmissible, and which we shall hardly dare to repeat to the Committee of Public Safety."

We sent the spy back with Lebrun, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had accompanied him, and who, he told us, had expected proposals of another sort from what this emissary of Mr. Pitt had said to him. MM. Cambon, Lindet and I made the report upon this conference to the Committee of Public Safety, who approved of the breaking off all such communications; and Mr. Pitt's agent appeared no more before the committee. But he did not fail to go frequently to the Foreign Office, to which he had cleverly gained admittance under the pretext of a political agency. The minister informed us subsequently that that man had actually played the part of a spy, and that several documents on the subject had reached him. It was suggested to him that he should return to England, as his mission was at an end. As he did not hasten to obey, he was watched, and in the end he had to be arrested until he was reclaimed by his government. Only then was Mr. Pitt's faithful observer returned to him. That was all that the English minister desired to obtain from this mission to France.

Federalism—My Personal Feelings on the Proscriptions of this Period.

When the events of the 31st of May and the 1st and 2nd of June were known in the departments, they

were so far disapproved that to federate, to separate from a capital which violated the national representation which it was charged to defend as a sacred trust, became a political opinion and a patriotic sentiment in thirty or thirty-six departments. Hence those internal conflicts at Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, and Caen; hence that treason which delivered the arsenals of the port of Toulon to the Spaniards and English in the name of the King of France.

The committee, forced by these terrible circumstances to outlaw—that is to say, to proscribe—the principal administrators of those departments, charged me to promulgate decrees of which I disapproved, as there were at Tarbes and Bordeaux several of my old friends included in the extreme measures of proscription. I here set down irrefutable proofs of my real sentiments in this matter, although I was obliged to read from the tribune, as reporter, the decrees voted by the Committee of Public Safety.

The first proof of my personal feelings regarding these odious proscriptions is as follows: I had written to M. Isaac Tarteyron, my friend at Bordeaux, a member of the administrative authorities of the Gironde, to send a protest, signed by himself, against the deliberations of federalism. M. Tarteyron sent it to me, and I myself caused it to be recorded, in the month of June, 1793, on one of the registers of the Committee of Public Safety established for this purpose in accordance with a decree which I had had issued in favour of public functionaries who protested against federalism. This act of M. Tarteyron, thus recorded, was of such good service to him that, several months later, having hidden himself in a retreat unknown to his enemies

and denunciators, he asked me for a copy of his protest. It was the document which, after the first shock of the storm, became his means of safety with the representatives sent on a mission to Bordeaux, who removed his outlawry and readmitted him to the rights of citizenship before the 9th of Thermidor.

Here is the second proof of my personal sentiments regarding the proscription lists. Six administrators of the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées, who had been brought before the Committee of General Safety in Paris to be tried on the charge of federalism, came to my house with their gendarmes. I took them before the Committee of General Safety; I spoke for them, and testified to their principles and patriotism. I begged Chabot, who held very pronounced views against the Girondins and their adherents, to undertake the report in the matter. I spoke of it to several of my colleagues, and waited in the Convention until the report was made. Chabot came at last, several days later, to justify the conduct of my fellow citizens and friends. They were absolved from all recriminations, and I hastened to tell them so and embrace them.

My Proscribers.

I was attacked in the newspapers and writings of that time, which were almost all similar in their views to those of the Jacobin Club. If my case was put off, it was because I was a member of the Committee of Public Safety, making reports and doing much work every day. At all periods of revolutions and crises there were those honest souls and beneficent citizens who applied to me proscribed names. For instance, they called me a Jacobin when, on the 21st of June, 1791,

M. Achille Duchâtelet proposed the Republic to the Jacobins. They hailed me as a Feuillant when after the revision an attack was made on those Jacobins who wished to maintain the constitution against the enterprises meditated in the month of September, 1791. It will be seen later that these same proscribers called me a Girondin when the Girondins were arrested in 1793; as they called me Terrorist when the reaction of the 9th of Thermidor had commenced the atrocities; as, finally, I was accused of being one of the Robespierrists when they were prosecuted with the extremest rigour. Yet it was notorious that I was the first to ascend the tribune to attack the power of that tyrant, and that I had caused him to be outlawed on the 9th of Thermidor, at ten o'clock in the evening, together with the members of the Commune, who had received him, and who had armed the sections against the Convention.

[It will be seen subsequently that I was no more fortunate under the Directory, when I was interrogated after the 18th of Fructidor in the year V., after the 22nd of Floreal in the year VI., and in the domiciliary visits of Fructidor in the year VII., when they imputed to me the name and accusation of Anarchist—to me, who had been hidden from the month of October, 1795. The same fate was in store for me under the Consulate, which caused me to be exiled from Paris as a Republican, on the 27th of Vendémiaire, in the year IX.; then under the paternal rule of Louis XVIII., who excluded me from his constitutional charter and placed me on his proscription list as a Bonapartist in 1815 (24th of July), an epoch when it was the fashion in Paris to proscribe

everyone under this title. Nevertheless, in the sight and knowledge of all Paris, of all France, and especially of the numerous public functionaries of the Consulate and the Empire, it is unquestionable that I was removed with an insulting affectation from every sort of office, and even from the elections of the Senate for the legislative body, during the entire reign of the despot. Such is the justice of men during, and even after, revolutions!]

Danton prompts the Formation of a New Committee of Public Safety.

When one considers what was done by the first Committee of Public Safety, it will be found that it was constantly occupied with the equipment of the battalions which came from all parts devoid of all means of carrying on war, owing to the measures taken prior to the Convention by the agents of the executive power. It also gave evidence how difficult it was to resist the threats of civil war which fell from every mouth, either in the southern departments, which were irritated by the events of the 31st of May, and federated; or in the departments of the west, which were exasperated by the recruitings and influenced by the nobles and priests. This was enough for Danton (who heard truly national opinions expressed in the midst of the committee every day) to embrace the idea of changing the members of this council, and of placing, if possible, his faithful creatures in it; while himself holding aloof from the committee to direct it, to make it act according to his pleasure, and not to incur any responsibility of government. One day in the month of July, he rose and declared

to the Convention, with a disinterested air, that public affairs did not make sufficient progress, and had not a sufficiently pronounced character in the midst of the divisions of federalism and of La Vendée; that he believed that the members of the Committee of Public Safety should be renewed, or at least should be subjected to re-election; that this council of nine members was not numerous enough, and must be raised to twelve; that as for himself, he begged the Assembly to receive his resignation. "Being little fitted for this sort of work," said he, "I shall do better outside the committee. I shall thus be its spur instead of its agent, and I shall achieve more good."

Danton, conscious of the part he played in the inauspicious events of the 31st of May, felt that he would not be re-elected by the National Convention to the new Committee of Public Safety. He then affected that tone of superiority and surveillance which displeased the independent members of the Convention. Thus he had the cynical imprudence to proclaim himself fitted for the dictatorship.

This haughty speech, pronounced with vigorous lungs and a frank and disinterested show of patriotism, was followed by a decree renewing the members of the committee. The list of names was then read. R. Lindet and I were the only ones who remained in the second committee, into which entered Hérault de Séchelles, Jean Bon Saint-André, Prieur of the Marne, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Saint-Just, and Couthon.

The first Committee of Public Safety had lasted from the 5th of April until the end of July, 1793.

The second existed from the end of July, 1793, until the month of October, 1794.

The third covered the reaction from the month of October, 1794, until the beginning of the year III. on the 5th of Brumaire (October, 1795).

I have thought proper to set these limits down briefly because some people confuse these three epochs, which are quite distinct.

Operations of the Second Committee—Election of Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or.

Owing to the reconstruction prompted by Danton we were nine in this committee, who divided among themselves the various branches of government. Hérault de Séchelles and I conducted the foreign affairs in common; Billaud and Collot undertook the correspondence with the departments and representatives on missions in the interior; Lindet and Prieur of the Marne were charged with the provisions and supplies, together with the management of foreign agencies in this department; Jean Bon Saint-André took the Admiralty. Saint-Just asked to deal with the institutions and the constitutional laws. As for Couthon, he was infirm, and rarely attended the committee.

All the most essential departments thus remained without heads, such as war, the plans of campaign, the organisation and the formation of the armies—in a word, the public defence in munitions as well as in men. It was I who then proposed to add to the nine members of the committee MM. Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or (August, 1793), both being engineer officers, full of zeal, talent, and honesty, endowed with the courage necessary under the circumstances, having a profound knowledge

of their profession and all the devotion of a wise and enlightened patriotism. I had only to propose for them to accept, and I take credit for having made this present to France. I submitted their appointment to the Assembly; MM. Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or were immediately included in the committee, the one at the head of the bureaux of the establishment and *morale* of the army, and the other at the head of the supplies. It was these two collaborators, proposed by me, I repeat, to the committee, and confirmed by the voice of the Convention, who placed the committee in a position to defend the glory of the French name by admirable plans of campaign, and to protect the territory and the frontiers of France against all invasion by means of an armament as prompt as it was strong and universal.

Hardly had Carnot become a member of the committee, when he felt the need of making a general requisition of young Frenchmen, from the age of eighteen to twenty-five. He had foreseen that this sort of levy, once carried out, would suffice for all the requirements of the armies necessary on all the frontiers of France, and would save her in the space of a year. Carnot made the plans of campaign, with a facility equal to that with which he drew up the bills and decrees, relative to their execution. He pointed out to me his needs of legislation in various respects, and I immediately wrote my report, in order to explain the objects of these laws from the tribune.

One of the first general deliberations of this committee, which is so little known from its real labours, and so ill appreciated as to its results, turned on three essential points at once: (1st) public defence; (2nd) the constitution; (3rd) the direction of the measures

of the government to unite all Frenchmen, to save France, and preserve her territory from foreign invasion.

These three points were so well discussed in their entirety, that the same day, the 15th of August, we convened all the deputies of the primary assemblies in Paris, to accept the republican constitution; that the same day we proclaimed the requisition of Frenchmen from the age of eighteen to twenty-five, and charged the deputies of the primary assemblies to advocate the union of the departments as the only means of repulsing the enemies of France and of ensuring our liberty.[1]

The Constitution of 1793.

Without doubt this constitution was too perfect, too severe, too Spartan for Frenchmen. The Athenians themselves, who were worth more than we, notwithstanding some points of resemblance, would not have borne it. But the assembly made the great mistake of not making a trial of it, and of not frankly carrying it through instead of shutting it up in a cradle which was its tomb. It added to this evident mistake the more dangerous error of substituting for it what was so improperly called the decree of the revolutionary government, as if government and revolution could ever go together.

In the month of August, 1793, we had not yet

[1] Several errors may have been remarked in the foregoing details. For instance, the first list of members of the Committee of Public Safety, on the 5th of April, contains the names of Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, who were not appointed until the 6th of September. Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or entered it on the 14th of August, and Robespierre, whom Barère

reached that stage of exasperation and blindness which could lead us to forget the existence of the constitutional state in which everyone believed in good faith.

The constitution of 1793 has been so slandered that it has never been possible to discover whether it could receive the honours of political life in France, that is to say, in plain terms, whether it would work; for not a single one of its proposals was ever executed. When the committee saw all the departments in a commotion, some seeking to resist the Convention with armed force, while others federated and broke the political bond which united them to the metropolis; it felt how important it was that the constitution should come to rally all separate opinions and conciliate all discordant interests, at the same time removing all pretext for anarchical passions. Saint-Just was charged to draw up several portions of the act of constitution. Several others were entrusted to me and to Hérault de Séchelles. We worked for ten days, during which Hérault de Séchelles composed the introductory speech as well. We met and made our work into a whole, and on the 15th of August I was able to submit to the Convention and the delegates of the primary assemblies the act of constitution and the declaration of rights, preceded by a report on the reasons for its acceptance by citizens of all classes.

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does not mention until later, was a member of the committee from the 27th of July, in succession to Gasparin, who resigned. These dates are not without importance in the history of the time.

Barere's memory sometimes plays him false, and it is to be feared that an authority such as his might lead some writers into error.—NOTE BY THE EDITOR

The Requisition.

The constitution presented but few difficulties during discussion, but the requisition suffered much by it, for Danton, who exaggerated everything, or who perhaps had some views or some interest in impeding everything, strongly insisted, on several occasions, that the requisition should affect a greater number of young men, and that it should include those from the age of sixteen to twenty-five. It was then that I vigorously protested against this dangerous means of causing complaints to break out at once throughout France, to carry alarm into every family by *reaping* young Frenchmen rather than calling them to the defence of the country. I observed that no military legislator, conqueror, or barbaric chief had ever yet conceived the idea of taking his soldiers from the cradle, and thus making an army of infants. These expressions had their effect. I insisted, in the name of the true needs of public defence, that the requisition should furnish defenders strong enough at the age of eighteen, and that they should not be more than twenty-five, the only method of not rendering the hopes of the community sterile, as well as the men who, having passed the age of twenty-five, should perpetuate by marriage the generations for which the wise legislator should always work. Finally I prevailed over the popular eloquence of Danton, my plan for a decree was adopted, and rendered fewer men unhappy by affecting fewer individuals in each family.

Condorcet's Scheme of a Constitution.

Several months previously, the Convention had commenced to discuss a long constitution scheme sub-

mitted, and in great part drawn up by, the academician Condorcet, an enlightened philanthropist and celebrated mathematician. This constitution, of which I had already succeeded in bringing up a certain number of articles for discussion in the month of March, was nevertheless condemned as being too lengthy and diffuse, of being too cut-and-dried, of containing proposals too clever and too difficult to be carried out in all that concerned the primary and electoral assemblies. The defection of Dumouriez, the reverse of Neerwinden, the treasons and suspicions which broke out in the provinces intervened to crush the debate, and so it was dropped when federalism threatened us and the need arose for a short and precise constitution not necessitating discussions and long delays. It is none the less true that the publicists and politicians, as well as the true philosophers, will find useful ideas and institutions in Condorcet's constitution, when political and revolutionary passions have settled down and calmer minds worthier of a wise liberty may compare and judge the results of that great epoch.

Position of France.

In the following month the committee became well aware of all the advantage of having a man as enlightened as Carnot at the head of affairs, for about this time M. de Cobourg proceeded to invest Maubeuge, as well as other fortified places on the northern frontier. Carnot arranged the plan of campaign, and asked to go and see it put into execution under his own eyes by Jourdan's army. In fact, Carnot went and placed himself at the head of a division, took and retook the village of Wattignies several times from the troops commanded by

M. de Cobourg, and greatly assisted Jourdan's army in pursuing and defeating the Austrians and in completely raising the siege of Maubeuge.

The end of the month of October was marked by sinister auspices. The allies appeared on all points of the frontier and threatened the fortified places, of which several indeed fell into their hands. The civil war made alarming progress in the western departments. The south had federated and revolted, and some of the ports and arsenals were given up. Enemies at home were agitating in proportion to the success of enemies abroad.

The Law of Suspects.

Unfortunately the Committee of Legislation caused Merlin to propose the terrible law of suspects, which made so many malcontents and victims, and which led to so much vexation and injustice. The prisons began to fill, war was waged against opinions, political consciences were vexed, all passions were appealed to; a crowd of interests were injured. The sad autumn of 1793 became still more melancholy owing to the numerous imprisonments, against which it seemed that public opinion should have shielded us, for it censured the authors of the law, and still more those who executed it with so much passion and so little discernment.

I informed the Committee of Public Safety of what I had perceived of the mournful and dangerous symptoms in public opinion and in the very heart of the most energetic republicans. I found the sentiments of the committee very favourable to my proposal of putting an end to the imprisonments, which always lead

to violent, persecuting, and unjust results. I proposed to imitate what, in similar circumstances, the United States of America had done to the zealous partisans of England or the royalists. These republicans had prepared boats and permitted all the royalists to embark, to emigrate freely, to carry their goods or money, and to seek a country and constitution analogous to their tastes and political opinion at will. In the name of the committee, I proposed from the tribune to put an end to these arbitrary imprisonments, and to leave to those in custody the option of withdrawing to the country which they believed most suitable for their safety, as had been done in America. Hardly had my proposal been made when Collot d'Herbois rose like a madman, and said that if I had been the head of the aristocracy in France I could not have used language more different from that of my report; that he opposed it because he saw in it great dangers to liberty; that if such a project were adopted, it could only be by the enemies of the people; and if anyone had fears on account of the arrested suspects, he must post himself before the prisons with cannon. I could not have imagined what the anger of a revolutionary was capable of suggesting if I had not heard it then. I begged to be allowed to defend my report, and more especially to prove that I had nothing in common with the aristocracy nor with the enemies of the people, but that I bore ill-will to the enemies of justice and real liberty. Then Collot contented himself, as well as several others, with demanding that my report should be sent to the Committee of Public Safety for more thorough examination, while others desired an indefinite postponement. It was however decided to refer it to the

committee. [See my report and the opinion of Collot, month of Brumaire, year II. (October, 1793).]

Behold me thus well and duly placed among the ranks of the defenders of the aristocracy because I foresaw that the law of suspects would produce great evils in society, and that it would cause a retrograde movement in public liberty. My calumniators have never paid any attention to the courageous opinions which I manifested (1) to prevent the establishment of the revolutionary tribunal; (2) to prevent the illegal arrests of deputies on the 31st of May; (3) to oppose the execution of the iniquitous law of suspects. Such nevertheless were my constant opinions; but paid calumniators are atrocious, and aristocrats ungrateful. I had no support or consolation excepting in my conscience, which told me I did well.

Robespierre enters the Committee of Public Safety — The Arrests multiply.

About this time Robespierre felt his ambition growing, and he thought that the moment had come to employ his influence and take part in the government. He took steps with certain members of the committee and the Convention, asking them to show a desire that he, Robespierre, should become a member of the Committee of Public Safety. He told the Jacobins it would be useful to observe the work and conduct of the members of the committee, and he told the members of the Convention that there would be more harmony between the Convention and the committee if he entered it.

Several deputies spoke to me about it, and the proposal was made to the committee by Couthon

and Saint-Just. To ask was to obtain, for a refusal would have been a sort of accusation, and it was necessary to avoid any split during that winter which was inaugurated in such a sinister manner. The committee agreed to his admission, and Robespierre was proposed. Hardly had he entered when rigorous measures became the order of the day, and time was devoted to proceeding with the charge against the deputies who had been arrested on the 31st of May. In this the Committee of Public Safety took no part. But Robespierre, having become one of its members, proceeded to excite the zeal and even to assist the operations of the Committee of General Surety, a body entirely distinct from the Committee of Public Safety, and alone charged with the execution of the decrees of arrest, and with bringing before the judicature all that related to the law of suspects.

Consequently, arbitrary arrests speedily increased in the environs of Paris, in the castles and country houses, principally within a radius of ten or twelve leagues from the capital. Such an arrest I considered that of a M. de Travanet, whom I had known well in his residence on the Boulevard des Italiens, when he bought a large quantity of national property at the beginning of the Revolution, and among others the magnificent abbey of Royaumont, to establish a fine industry there, an immense cotton factory, which supported a thousand families. It was a benefactor of the country whom Robespierre thus prosecuted, owing to the denunciation of some interested person. M. de Travanet was arrested as well as everyone in his house. I only knew the fact through the adventure of Madame Mailly, who

was with him at Royaumont, and who, wishing to defend the patriotism of M. de Travanet, was included in the arrests and lodged in the Paris prisons. This lady, who had much character and courage, was awaiting the decision of the committee in their case with M. de Travanet, in one of the halls of the Committee of General Surety, when Robespierre left the committee-room. Madame Mailly turned to him and said, "When one does an act of tyranny such as arresting a brave man, a patriot, who affords a livelihood to more than a thousand families by a manufactory established on national property, it would be more straightforward to shoot him with a pistol." These words only served to incense the *beginner* in tyranny, and the same evening he had M. de Travanet, Madame Mailly, and all who had been brought from the abbey of Royaumont thrown into prison.

These facts reached me through the deputy Dupin, of the department of the Aisne. He himself had been informed by Madame Mailly, who asked him to speak to me in order that I might obtain her release as well as that of M. de Travanet from the prison of Sainte-Pélagie. I could not interfere in this affair without exposing them to a longer detention; it was the only privilege I had. Therefore I begged M. Dupin to speak to M. Moïse Bayle and several other members of the Committee of General Surety to obtain in good time their liberation, when Robespierre and his agents should have lost sight of their victims of Royaumont. M. Dupin did this with much circumspection and prudence. At the end of two months he succeeded in effecting the release of Madame Mailly, and I was

able shortly afterwards to place and keep M. de Travanet in a private hospital, where he remained until the 9th of Thermidor without risk of being compromised in any list or denunciation, like so many others.

Robespierre was continually occupied with urging on the trial of those whom he called the Girondins. There were several deputies among them, with whom I was closely connected and whom to my grief I could in no way assist. Danton and the Jacobins were too anxious to justify the crime which they had themselves caused to be committed on the 31st of May. It is thus that in a revolution one outrage, one mistake, or one violation of rights, leads to a second and third, and a fresh crisis is the necessary consequence.

Military Events—"Dead Men tell no Tales."

The events of the war took up much of our time throughout the winter (1794). All would be lost if by the spring the Convention did not mobilise immense forces, and if there were not successes on the frontier and a good public spirit at home.

I, for my part, was charged with a mass of reports on the war in La Vendée, which extended in proportion as the intrigues of the Paris Commune despatched thither battalions organised under its influence; the Minister of War, Bouchotte, did not know how to resist it. Intrigues had previously been carried on with the committee to send Santerre, whom everyone regarded as incapable of commanding a single brigade.

As in this unhappy civil war we could only choose between two evils, several months previously I had

made a report to obtain the sanction of the Convention to send the garrison from Valenciennes to La Vendée. In this report I announced to the Convention the outrages committed by our enemies, and especially by the English, on the representatives who had shut themselves up in Valenciennes during the siege, and who, to leave in virtue of the capitulation, were obliged to disguise themselves and to hear the imprecations and insults cast by the soldiers of a free people upon the republic and republicans.[1] It was in this report also that I emphasised the fact that if General Houchard, the victor in the engagement at Hondschoot, had exterminated the twelve thousand English soldiers under the command of the Duke of York, he himself being a fugitive on his vessels, who had been surrounded and who had gone down on their knees when they threw down their arms on the dunes of Dunkirk, those same English soldiers would not have come several months later and insulted our troops and representatives when they left Valenciennes on the faith of a treaty; and I added, "*Dead men tell no tales.*"

See in what sense and as the result of what expressions I uttered these words, which my calumniators in Paris have distorted, exaggerated, and rendered altogether execrable by applying them to the unfortunate

[1] M. Dembarrère, my uncle, an engineer officer, was shut up in the citadel of Valenciennes when the Austrians and English besieged it. He returned to Paris with the officers of that garrison, when Valenciennes was delivered up to the enemy. These officers handed me a detailed memorandum of the events of the siege, which I communicated to the Committee of Public Safety. In it was set forth the atrocious insolence of the Austrians, and especially of the English, towards the soldiers and officers of the

victims of the trials and revolutionary measures at home. I would have broken my pen for ever, and my voice would have failed me in the tribune, rather than that I should have used these words in the frightful sense which my enemies and journalists have not ceased to ascribe to them. God forbid that I should so far insult the misfortune of so many victims of the Revolution! I was myself affected in my own family, thanks to the hatred of one of those proconsuls called representatives on mission.

It is not known, or, rather, people did not wish to know, that some of these victims belonged to my own family, and that, while I was in the tribune clothed with an appearance of power and political influence, Monestier of Puy-de-Dôme, a priest sent as our representative into the departments of the Upper and Lower Pyrenees, only sought to persecute me and my family. First of all he seized all my letters at the house of my friend, M. Desbet, a former administrator of the department, letters of which he subsequently gave copies and even the originals to the Frérons, the Talliens, and other enemies who persecuted me in the Convention. This Monestier dragged to the scaffold a lady worthy of respect on account of her age and her virtues, who had been denounced to him as my relative. She was the widow of Neys-Caudan Lucarré, my mother's

French garrison when it filed out of the citadel. They especially attempted to insult the national representatives, and they proceeded to such a degree of arrogance and insult that M. Cochon de l'Apparant and another representative, who were then at Valenciennes, were obliged to put on soldiers' tunics in order to avoid molestation, to which they would have been subjected if they had been recognised, for the English looked for them among the ranks as the troops defiled.

cousin, who belonged to that family. This same man had accused my cousin-german, Jacques Barère, the president of the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées, of counter-revolution and imprisoned him in the citadel of Bayonne. My power was indeed extensive!

After this short digression, I must return to the disastrous war in La Vendée, which was the object of several reports on my part, for the purpose, not of further spreading the large sore of the State, but of bringing to an end a conflict as shameful as it was barbarous, in which Frenchmen fought against Frenchmen. It was very necessary that I should inform the Convention, when we had the pain of observing that notwithstanding the express orders given by the committee to the generals of the Republic, there were a swarm of agents and commissioners of the Commune of Paris, with the various divisions of the army on French soil.

From the outset we suspected that there was a golden thread leading from the Commune of Paris to London, and that in England the French *émigrés* of high rank united their manœuvres with the ministerial intrigues of St. James' to fan the flame of civil war in France to maintain and extend this political and military point of resistance. But, up to the period of the creation and despatch of these strange *civil war commissioners*, sent by order of the Commune of Paris to the fields of battle and into the republican camps, we had no such direct and palpable proofs of the premeditated cause of our reverses and of the atrocities committed by our own soldiers. We were not so well acquainted with all that had been done to embitter parties and protract this civil war indefinitely, in the deep design of those

who paid for it (with our money) in London, and of those who directed it (by corruption) in Paris.

Concerning the National Convention.

The dictatorship of the Convention could only save public liberties by sacrificing individual liberties, even as it could only preserve the integrity and independence of the territory of the country by making requisitions of men and supplies, and by means of battles and victories, which were always bought too dearly by arming the populace, thus causing the disorders of wholesale levies. Thus, the National Convention, having to defend France against civil wars, against federalism, and royalist conspiracies at home, at the same time that abroad it fought with its armies against the coalition of all the kings of Europe, who were paid and excited by the English government, must inevitably clash with many interests, commit many violent actions, injure a number of liberties, and thwart many political passions. The National Convention was fighting hand to hand with all Europe. At all points was it fighting the bands of royalists, fomenting conspiracies at home and corruption abroad. Resistance produced excesses, while the plots to be baffled justified the measures employed by the Convention. For the nation it was a question of liberty and independence; for France it was a question of her existence and nationality. All means of general defence became legitimate and just, since their object was to save the country from the fate of unhappy Poland, and to prevent the execution of the treaties for the partition of France, signed at Pilnitz and Pavia.

Events have shown that there was but one path

to follow to save France and liberty, and that the Convention had adopted the only means of ensuring the national defence.

La Vendée and Danton.

The different writers who have published memoirs regarding the war in La Vendée during the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, have spoken of it as partisans, either Vendéens or republicans. They have spoken of it according to certain isolated local facts, or according to lying or inadequately-informed newspapers, or interested traditions. But I have examined with care, and I have seen these intrigues in progress, because I had to observe and make them known. This task formed part of my responsibility in the work of the government. Moreover, my colleagues, especially Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or, were the first to recognise the false step of our leaders in La Vendée and the baleful influence exercised by the Commune of Paris.

It was impossible for me to discover for whom and with what purpose Danton's party was working in that disastrous war, which was always believed to be nearing its end, and which, like the fires of a volcano, rose again from its very ashes and time after time recommenced its ravages. I remember having seen Fabre d'Eglantine, who was the confidential aide-de-camp of Danton, come to the Committee of Public Safety, about eight o'clock every evening, for about a fortnight. He beset the committee regarding the war in La Vendée until he had obtained by his importunity an undertaking that the committee should consider the urgent necessity of despatching volunteer battalions from Paris, and of giving the general

command of this army to Santerre, one of Danton's docile instruments. Was he acting thus in the interest of the Commune, through the insinuations of a powerful party which was established principally in Germany and afterwards in London, or had he rather an idea of grasping all the political influence and powers of the Convention to establish the system of modification and indulgence which he advocated through the *Vieux Cordelier?* Under this name Camille Desmoulins edited a reactionary newspaper which did much harm by its precocity and hypocrisy, although some of the moderate sentiments therein expressed with as much spirit as address ought not to be disavowed by any French citizen, or any individual with a human heart. It is more particularly the duty of inexorable and truth-seeking history to indicate the secret causes and the guilty or interested agents of that execrable civil war. Then, doubtless, people will be greatly astonished at seeing what hands have torn the breast of their country, what profound hypocrites have maintained in the heart of France that political contagion and that furious phantom which was to prevent public liberty from being established, and the right of the people to organise itself, protected by a constitution and wise laws.

My Reports to the Convention.

Among my most important works I must include the task entrusted to me of protecting France against the insinuations and corruptions of the English government. I made several reports upon the crimes of this government towards France. In them I dwelt upon the shameful conduct of the British nation, which has the pride

to call itself free, and which persecutes liberty in all other nations as a rival or an enemy. I proved at the time by the mention of three hundred English merchantmen which our cruisers and privateers had brought into our ports within a year that the French navy knew how to maintain the naval power of France and ensure the liberty of the seas. The reports of the committee produced the double effect of destroying Anglomania in France and of giving greater intensity to the public spirit and greater energy to the army against the English and their stipendiaries of the North.

I also made a report on the supplies and provisions necessary for the fourteen armies which were being organised at various points on our frontiers; another report on the manufacture of arms, powder, and saltpetre indispensable for so many armies and for a war which would in the spring become general, which would threaten our fortresses, the frontier departments, and several maritime towns that were coveted by British ambition.

Another report was on the establishment of the École de Mars, which was intended to give a fresh military education to officers of all arms on the lines of a normal school.

Another report was on the means of destroying the disgraceful scourge of mendicity and of giving the poor and unfortunate assistance in their own homes. It was this report, of which I shall always invoke the recollection, and which alone perhaps will recommend me a little to coming generations, but which has also made for me the most implacable and numerous enemies in that rich and brilliant class which believes that mendicity is necessary in a State to weaken discontent and resistance, as also

to serve as followers to fortune and to form a *clientèle* for the opulent avarice of the happy and powerful ones of the earth.

Another report was on the means of making the French tongue universal in several of the departments of the East and West, where the laws were hardly known because the inhabitants of Brittany and of several other provinces which had recently joined did not understand the national language. It is known, moreover, that the committee was obliged to have the decrees, the constitution, the reports, the proclamations, and the news of the armies translated into the Italian language for the Alpine departments, such as the country of Nice, Chambéry, and other departments of the East which did not understand French. It was M. Boldoni, a celebrated professor of a Paris *lycée*, who undertook this translation, which was entitled "Bulletino Nazionale." It consisted of two large octavo volumes.

Another report was on bridges and roads, as well as on navigable canals. It was in this work, which I did in the month of Messidor—that is to say, at the disastrous period when the number of victims and outrages increased in a frightful manner—that I had the courage to attack the atrocious prodigality of penal executions which were conducted and accelerated by Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Couthon as they approached the moment of the realisation of their project of dictatorship, as I shall have occasion to explain more fully.

Calumnies directed against my Reports.

The journalists and counter-revolutionists, under whatever title or disguise they desired to place them-

selves, always sought to traduce my reports. They poisoned, by their idle calumnies, that celebrity which is given by the tribune and which had never been the object of my seeking or ambition. They corrupted my phrases; they distorted their meaning and application. They imputed to me what did not belong to me; they have ascribed to me words I never uttered, but whose authorship is given by the *Moniteur*.

To disgrace and accuse me in the *salons*, journals, and pamphlets of Paris, everyone repeats that I said, "*Money is being coined on the Place de la Révolution*": an atrocious expression, and one which I have never thought or expressed, an expression which has nothing in common with the political and military objects of my various reports, an expression which only relates to finance, and which was, in fact, uttered in a report made in the name of the finance committee to the National Convention, from the mouth of one whom everyone knows. Nevertheless, the salaried calumniators, who are so numerous in the capital, never cease imputing it to me, because they have got into the habit of it, and what they like the least in Paris, where everything is changeable, is to vary hatred and calumny. I replied to this accusation, and showed the innate falsity of those who spread it. I had already replied to it in the year III. (1795) in a printed defence which, in the month of February, was distributed among the Convention. It was then quite a fresh scandal, and I attacked it in its birth by a formal denial that I gave to Fréron, a libeller and reactionary, the author of the "People's Orator." This man stabbed me with his pen every morning before the sneering eyes of the populace of the capital; for

calumny, unrestrained in our day, is nothing but a moral assassination. I had replied to the accusation also in the first pages of a work entitled "Thoughts on the Government," an octavo volume, published in the year V. (1797); therein I refuted Necker, Payen, and other writers of the same calibre, who enjoyed repeating the scandals of Fréron.

On the other hand, when in one of those much maligned reports was found a sentence worth quoting, full of humane and honourable sentiments, they never said a word. Would this have found favour with my unjust enemies, this phrase which was then thought so bold that it was denounced by the Jacobin Club? I refer to the words in which I finished my report on the bridges, the highways, and the navigable canals. "It is by these public works, whose utility sanctions their expense, it is by the high roads and thoroughfares necessary to trade, it is by opening up navigable canals and joining them with the principal rivers of France that we succeed in encouraging industry, the precursor of riches; it is by such works and by similar increase of communication that nations are civilised and their inhabitants made prosperous, rather than by a horrible profusion of penal laws and a terrible prodigality of executions." [*Vide* the *Moniteur* of the month of Messidor, year II. (1794).]

My Fame as an Orator—Enmities provoked thereby.

I was thus called to take a share, and that a most active one, in public affairs at the beginning of the most painful work of the Convention. This was also when its rule was in greatest danger, for the troubles in La Vendée were increasing, the disturbances in the

interior were at their height through the persecution carried on against the federalists, by suspicions aroused by the nobility and the friends of the emigrants, as well as by the sad necessity of putting down the anti-revolutionary plots. Indeed, it is the fate of a new government to ruffle many prejudices, to infringe many interests, and to be in its turn attacked by a mass of irritated or maleficent enemies. One must therefore submit to all the inconveniences of so great a public upset and all the scheming of the dregs of the people. As for myself, seeing the fall of so many deputies, so many unfortunate thinkers, so many prisoners, for political opinions, which were inspired by conviction or good faith, and which should have absolved them, I learned to meet my fate, and I provoked proscription. Thus I shunned no undertaking to which my oratory and my fluency of speech before the Convention led me. This originated the enmity of so many deputies and outsiders. The Athenian peasant loathed to hear Aristides termed the Just, and voted for his banishment; in the same way these tongue-tied deputies hated to hear me cheered on coming into the Chamber and to find me always the speaker of the Committee of Public Safety. These cheers, which were heard when I entered the ante-chamber, and which preceded my appearance at the tribune during the whole of the year 1794, roused the hatred of the Jacobins, the bile of Robespierre, and the envy of Saint-Just to the extent that I was thrice denounced at the Jacobin Club. There everything was said to ruin me, and my influence in the tribune was said to be dangerous to liberty. Carnot showed me one day, when I joined the committee, the journal of

the Mountain or of the Jacobin Club, wherein I was denounced by an old democratic fanatic, then president of the department of the Seine, and an agent of Robespierre. I thought it my duty to request my audience, through an usher, to refrain thenceforth from these marks of approbation; and I went to speak to M. Trouvé, the editor of the *Moniteur*, in order that, for the future, in his quasi-official paper, he should no longer record the fact that I was accompanied to the tribune by cheers, a fact which might be fatal to me. About the same time it was noted that in the army intelligence and in the generals' letters such or such a bulletin of the Convention had been published on the eve of a battle, and that this publication had doubled the vigour of the army. The commander-in-chief of the armies of the Alps wrote, for example, that, in the midst of the troubles of 1794, our soldiers charged the Piedmontese, crying, "Barère the orator!" What urged them to fight was the idea that they and their courageous conduct would be boldly proclaimed from the tribune. Such is the French soldier with his love of glory and renown. But I, alas! was the victim of the hatred and enmity provoked by my celebrated oratorical power. The future will do justice to my modest patriotism; my contemporaries have cruelly punished me for it.

Retaking of Toulon—Carnot causes the Plans of Dugommier and Bonaparte to be Amalgamated and Adopted by the Committee.

The month of March saw the reopening of the campaign. We started with the retaking of Toulon, and as to this feat, I must here relate some anecdotes

of the inner working of the committee hitherto unknown. General Dugommier had received the order to quit the Western Pyrenees and move into the department of the Var. Before passing through the gorges of Olioules he made his plan for attacking Toulon and driving out the English and Spanish, to whom the royalists of Toulon had given up this key of the Mediterranean. An artillery officer named Bonaparte—a Corsican by extraction and ambitious by temperament—had his plan of attack too; in 1794 he simply held the rank of captain. Salicetti, also a Corsican, was one of the representatives sent by the committee to direct and urge on the necessary operations for the retaking of Toulon, which would have a great influence on the whole of this decisive campaign against the Coalition. He undertook to lay before the Committee of Public Safety, during the winter of 1793-94, the two plans of attack drawn up by General Dugommier and Captain Bonaparte.

Carnot examined them with the closest attention, and made his report with the plans before him, as was his custom. He showed the advantages to be found in both plans, and came to the conclusion that they should be amalgamated and followed. General Dugommier was too good a patriot to be offended at this decision, or that the plans of an inferior officer of his army should be adopted—at least in part. Captain Bonaparte on his side was too ambitious not to be flattered by the adoption of some of his ideas. As I have said, Carnot insisted on the amalgamation, and that both plans should be considered as one. The committee went to work, as time pressed. A few hours were enough, and on the morrow all was

written, developed, and discussed. The committee felt it only just that to Bonaparte should be confided that portion of the attack he himself had suggested; but as his rank of captain did not warrant the command of so important an operation, the committee promoted him to the rank of major. This was Bonaparte's first step on the ladder of his military advancement, which was thus started by the Committee of Public Safety, of which in his prosperity he spoke ill or well, as his passions or circumstances dictated.

When he was Consul he said, "The Committee of Public Safety was the only one which succeeded in really governing; it is the only government France knew during the Revolution." If he spoke of the deputies of the Convention, he reproached them for their ideal plans and their republican innovations.

So Salicetti returned to Olioules with the plans, maps, and decrees of the committee. The realisation of these plans was followed with the happiest results. Dugommier directed the operations with admirable sagacity, dash, and steadiness. Bonaparte, now a major, bravely put himself at the head of his gunners, and, well backed by his troops, attacked and carried Fort Lamalgue and the batteries *en échelon* on the brow of the hill with unequalled audacity and celerity.

The Bill drawn by Glory.

This triumph of the army was announced by myself from the tribune, and I represented this victory as a bill of exchange which national fame had drawn, by means of the army of the Western Pyrenees, on the other armies of the Republic. A word, a mere nothing, a happy thought, is sufficient to electrify

French courage. This "bill of exchange drawn by glory" was honoured by the other armies; the term was used in the generals' correspondence, and every day, after the retaking of Toulon was known on the various frontiers, saw and recorded fresh military successes. I could not do justice to them. Every evening Carnot sent me a bundle of the generals' letters, and as soon as I had extracted the materials for a combined report on the state of the armies and on the conduct of the war, I made a private report touching the retaking of one of our fortresses, or a particular victory at some essential point.

Members of Committee sent on Missions.

Whilst the Coalition, massed in the Netherlands, attacked us on the sea-coast, the English made demonstrations against our Channel ports. The committee sent Prieur of the Marne on a mission to the ocean ports, his headquarters being at Lorient. Jean Bon Saint-André wished to go on a mission to Brest, and all was arranged there to protect the arrival of a large quantity of corn and rice which the committee had obtained by means of its alliance with the United States of America.

Thomas Paine, an American member of the Convention, had given us great help in this matter; he showed us the way to go to work, he aided in the correspondence, and worked hard in the Foreign Office to bring about this extensive purchase of food, all the more necessary as without its help our armies and the provinces were threatened with terrible famine. And this came about indeed in the next year, 1795. And the reason for it was because the agents of the

committee, who had with great foresight prepared and collected food in 1794, were swept away by the reaction, and in the place of the intelligent and hard-working Robert Lindet, commissary-general, one Boissy d'Anglas appeared at the third and last committee, he whom the people of Paris surnamed Boissy Famine. I do not myself approve of the nickname; I content myself with relating notorious public facts.

My Occupations become more Numerous—Devotion to Public Work.

The departure of these deputies on missions, taken as they were from the Committee of Public Safety, cast their work on those that remained. I had my full share because I never refused to do the duties imposed upon me. It required all the promptings of ardour, courage, patience, devotion, love of country, and a desire for liberty, to brace one up to undertake all the work put on me from November, 1793, until I retired from the committee at the end of October, 1794.

That year saw me working at one and the same time at:

1. The offices of the Committee for Foreign Affairs (with Hérault de Séchelles).

2. The offices of the Naval Committee, in the absence of Jean Bon Saint-André, from the month of February, 1794.

3. Public monuments, theatres, libraries, and public education.

4. The office connected with the repression of mendicity, and the administration of public relief.

5. All the acts of public legislation, and chiefly on

drafts of decrees on the administration of the war and the reports of the victories of our fourteen armies.

6. At midnight I went to the chamber, where the ministers were at work seated round a large table. A council of general purposes was first held, and afterwards I worked with each minister on the work of his department.

Let those people that think the work here recapitulated is imaginary, or above the powers of one man, make themselves easy; one need not be deceived by the humbug of placemen, who would make believe that they get through enormous amounts of work, which to men of their calibre is extremely easy. As for me, with neither pride nor modesty, I will tell you how I behaved in facing this varied work. I must add, however, I could not have done it without great devotion to public affairs and much enthusiasm for liberty, which centuples a man's strength; for it is not ambition for fortune, nor for political position (motives which never exist in the offices of a committee), nor for an increase of pay, honours, and distinctions, which can produce such supernal zeal.

Each of the members of the Committee of Public Safety, as those of the Convention, had a salary of eighteen francs per day, paid in assignats; that is to say, a nominal salary of eighteen francs, in reality much less. What a difference to those salaries which the deputies voted to themselves under the Consulate and under the Empire, when no amount of riches satisfied some public officials! However, two or three hundred persons sought audience of me every morning, among whom were the poor and the mothers of families in want. To repel these was neither to my taste nor

feelings. Everyone believed that a man in the government must be rich, that he must be well paid, and that he could help himself out of the public funds. This common error did not make me refuse to help them, and I myself was embarrassed by the depreciated value of the assignats. I was obliged to borrow, on one occasion, six thousand francs, and on another ten thousand francs, in January, 1794, to meet the expenses my position obliged me to incur with regard to these poor families and the number of importunates who gathered round the members of the government in great cities, open as I was to all sorts of requests. It was the Abbé de Gauderat, one of the King's chaplains at Versailles, an old friend of my father's, who did me the important service of lending me these sixteen thousand francs, and I was only partly able to recoup his heirs at Auch and Tarbes.

Details of my Work—Foreign Affairs—Admiralty—Public Monuments—Theatres.

Here is a *résumé* of what I did during all this period of danger and public misfortune which the founding of the Republic incurred:

1. Foreign affairs I had but little to do with. Alliances were made with Sweden, the United States, the Ottoman Porte, and Switzerland; all the rest of Europe was hostile and in arms against France. The business too was done in the offices of ministers, and there was but little to do or discuss.

2. The work in the Admiralty was reduced either to signing documents, or to drafting decrees to be discussed by the committee before presentation to the Convention, or to preparing orders to be signed by the

committee. These papers were adjourned, or signed, or taken into consideration for being made into law. The nominations were either granted by the committee or discussed by the Convention; but all these having been prepared in the ministerial offices, the government work was small.

3. As to the public buildings, two members of public education, MM. David and Fourcroy, submitted plans to me for their preservation and construction. Thus it was determined by the committee that the side of the Louvre parallel to the Museum of Painting and Sculpture should be built at the cost of the Republic during the circulation of assignats, so as to place the pictures in an open gallery with a glazed roof, and to remove the public library in the Rue de Richelieu into the gallery abutting on the Seine. The site of the old library was to be devoted to a large square between the Rue de Richelieu and the Rue de Vivienne, opposite the Arts Theatre (the Opera), with two imposing fountains and a piazza for pedestrians.

When this had been determined I brought from Marly the two marble horses, which were placed at the top of the great avenue of the Champs Elysées. There were to have been statues over the two side entrances of the Tuileries leading to the Pont Royal and the Rue Saint-Honoré. Large foundations were constructed; they are level with the ground, and were not utilised for their original purpose, and are surmounted with a railing.

The printed collection of the decrees of the Committee of Public Safety can still be consulted, which I had drawn up from the numerous reports of David and Fourcroy, as well as my own private reports as to

building public monuments, preserving those threatened with destruction, and doing honour to art in providing employment for artists.

I knew that Houdon, a celebrated sculptor, had no work and that he was in low water. I went to see his studio. I found works there which the Revolution prevented his finishing, among them a beautiful statue in Italian marble, representing St. Eustochia. It was intended for a side chapel in the church of the Invalides. "Finish this statue," I said to him; "give it some of the attributes of Liberty, and the committee will pay for it in ready money, to put it in the anteroom leading to the Convention." Houdon laughed at my idea. However, he went to work, was paid, and the statue was placed in that saloon, which is now known as the Hall of Liberty. Houdon is now alive, and can prove the fact.

I also placed in the Palace of the Tuileries those consular statues at the foot of which are the arcades, near the clock tower on the garden side, as well as those Greek and Roman busts which ornament the two façades of the building. I caused them to be removed from the magnificent garden of M. d'Orset, an emigrant, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain.

I also enriched the various libraries with a vast number of choice books from amongst those which had been declared national property. I preserved the books of the National Library, from which an ultra-revolutionary decree would have torn the beautiful bindings, under the pretext that on them were the arms of the Kings of France and the *fleurs-de-lis*.

At the request of the members of the Opera, which had been ruined at the Porte Saint-Martin from

the dearth of spectators, at a period when neither luxury nor carriages were to be found, I transferred this grand concern, under the name of the Theatre of Arts, into the hall built by Madame Montansier, on the ground once occupied by Louvois' house and garden. The committee, conjointly with this lady, valued the theatre and the compensation due to her. She was given, at fixed periods, a sum of four million francs. I paid her the first instalment, and started, in 1794, the opera, which, but for this decree of the committee, would have been abolished. The actors left for other theatres, or for England, and France thus lost a great school of art.

The troublous times of the Revolution, and the great number of assignats, lowered the receipts at all the great theatres. I was obliged to seek the aid of the committee in favour of the Feydeau Theatre, the Republican or Richelieu Theatre, and the theatre of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, known as the Théâtre Français. Sixty thousand francs, in two instalments, were given to the actors of the Feydeau Theatre and to the management of the theatre in the Rue de Richelieu, the chief of which was M. Gaillard. We did much more for the Grand Opera. As to the Saint-Germain Theatre, we had in justice to compensate Madame Montansier's actors, from whom we had taken the present opera.

When I returned from banishment, the actors of the Feydeau Theatre, the Opera, the Varieties, and the Vaudeville, for whom the committee had done but little, were alone grateful to me. I had, nevertheless, showered many favours on a large number of individuals in Paris, either as regards their lives, their

safety, their money, or their commercial transactions. All those benefits, it is true, were a pleasure to myself; but gratitude was proffered by the actors alone.

They were better than other men. Let me here record the testimony of my deep acknowledgment for all they have done to procure me some enjoyment in my old age. Art has consoled my troublous career.

The pay of the various actors who lived by their calling was five hundred thousand francs in arrear. I paid this before the opening of the Rue de Richelieu Theatre. Through the committee I gave Hubert, the architect, a zealous and talented man, one hundred and fifty thousand francs to repair and decorate their new stage, and this without reckoning the value of the plant, and moreover took care that the large audience should be comfortably seated in every part of the house.

These arrangements proved very satisfactory to the people. But what did not please them so much was the placing of two huge statues on each side of the proscenium. M. Hubert, who was a patriotic architect, tried to seize the spirit of the times by replacing the royal box with statues of Liberty and Equality. This was a kind of decoration hitherto unknown to playgoers. So, after the reaction had set in at the end of October, 1794, Liberty and Equality were hooted, taken away, or destroyed; the royal boxes were reopened, and they might as well have replaced the hated statues by those of Flattery and Slavery; but art ofttimes dare not express the feeling of the moment.

Artistic Commissions—Administration of Public Charity.

When the republican armies entered Belgium I caused a decree to be passed through the committee

that two commissioners, members of the Convention, should go to Antwerp, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Liège to collect the masterpieces of Rubens and the celebrated Flemish and Dutch schools, with which to enrich the French museums. M. Guiton-Morveau was the chief commissioner, who, while in Belgium, sent to Paris those fine pictures which Europe rushed to see as trophies of our victories. These are the acts of the committee which reactionaries have always termed acts of vandalism. On the contrary, it alone opposed with all the strength of the government those vandals who, never losing an opportunity to exaggerate the events of the Revolution and cause it to be detested by its fatal excesses, belonged much more to the hypocritical and reactionary horde which time alone will unmask.

As to the administration of public charity, a commission formed for that object, worthy of the attention of a wise and humane government, realised in the course of four months a plan for home aid, which the philanthropists of the *ancien régime* had thought impracticable, and which, carried out as it should and could be, would do away with social crime, would heal domestic sorrows, and calm the rulers of a nation. But in France philanthropy and humanity are confined to newspapers, books, and theatres. The government only busies itself with the rich, and the means of grasping riches. Its charity is official, and remedies none of those woes produced by the fraudulent or unfair division of property, and by the vicious distribution of work. The main error of government in France is the imprint of a useless ostentation, embarrassed by ruinous expenditure and systematic disorder.

Reports on the Armies.

The reports anent the necessary legislation for the army administration, and for the celebration of the triumph of our arms, were my chief task during the last eight months of my stay in the committee. It was a period of misfortune and glory, tears and triumphs. I took refuge in the army question, unable to bear the sad sight of the divisions in, and the barbarities of, our own country. The continued victories of our fourteen armies were as a cloud of glory over our frontiers, hiding from allied Europe our internecine struggles, and that unhappy side of our national character which acts and reacts so deplorably as much on the whole population as on our rights and our manners.

The enthusiasm with which I announced these victories from the tribune was so easily seen that Saint-Just and Robespierre, being in the committee at three in the morning, and learning of the taking of Namur and some other Belgian towns, insisted for the future that the letters alone of the generals should be read, without any comments which might exaggerate their contents.

I saw at once at whom this reproach was directed, and I took up the gauntlet with the decision of a man willing to once more merit the hatred of the enemies of our national glory, and the bravery of our armies. Then Saint-Just cried, "I beg to move that Barère be no longer allowed to add froth to our victories."

For two thousand years men had not talked of love of country, the rights of equality, the lust of true glory, deeds of liberty, self-renunciation, and of

those acts of courage and heroic constancy which the Greeks and Romans have bequeathed us. The armies of the French Republic reproduced those virtues which honoured the classical nations; on the fields of Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Holland, they have re-acted, they have even improved upon, the heroic feats that we read of in the annals of Greece and Rome.

Undoubtedly, to address gross flattery to an army is to overlook the great and pernicious influence of its generals, and creates that military spirit which sooner or later subjugates our liberties and decrees us a master. Thus, while Saint-Just was reproving me, Robespierre in pantomime supported the long-sightedness of his friend, and that statesmanlike prophecy which had likewise struck me; but this I thought was very ill-timed at the moment when Europe was threatening us with a partition which had been long since determined on at Pilnitz Castle, when now if ever we ought to disperse the enemy in the woods and marshes of Germany.

The next day my report on the taking of Namur was somewhat more carefully drawn up, and I alluded to the observation of my critics, who were envious of the power of public opinion in favour of our troops, then busied in saving the country. This phrase in my report was much commented on, although its meaning was only clear to those who had heard the debate in committee on the previous evening: "Sad are the times, sad is the period, when the recital of the triumphs and glories of the armies of the Republic is coldly listened to in this place! Henceforth liberty will be no longer defended by the country, it will be handed over to its enemies!"

Couthon tries to supplant me in reading the Army Reports.

This pronouncement was not of a nature to be forgiven by Saint-Just and Robespierre, so they determined to supplant me with regard to these reports. They forced that idiot Couthon to attend the Committee of Public Safety at eleven in the morning, before I got there. Couthon asked for the letters of the generals that had come in during the night, and took his usual seat at the back of the hall, waiting until the assembly was sufficiently full for him to announce the victories. About one, Couthon, being paralysed and unable to stand up in the tribune, coldly read the news from the armies from his place. This time no effect was produced in the Assembly, or upon the public. This attempt, authorised by Robespierre and Saint-Just, having missed fire completely, the committee signified its dissatisfaction at the innovation. Thenceforth I continued to proclaim the striking triumph of our arms, the raising of sieges, and the retaking of four fortresses on the northern frontier, and the chief successes of the army of the Western Pyrenees. However, after having published these last exploits, I voluntarily resigned my position on the military reports, for which posterity will thank me as much as my contemporaries condemned me.

Passing Events in the Body of the Committee before the Battle of Fleurus—Ammunition.

After recording these little-known details on my work (which I should never have brought before the public if my enemies had not been determined to calumniate them and give a sinister publicity to my

efforts for my country), I continue my narrative by taking up the details of the commencement of this campaign—a campaign memorable from the fact that in a few months we retook all the fortresses and ports occupied by the hordes of the North and East, drove the enemies of France far away, and forbade them to approach that beautiful capital that so many political furies and so many revenges of a reactionary character had threatened since the 14th of July, 1789.

The battle of Fleurus, in the spring, was for the north of France what, in the early part of 1794, the retaking of Toulon was for the south. No one doubts that these two triumphs were the precursors of many successes; these military operations are recorded everywhere. But what is not remembered are the events which happened within the Committee of Public Safety.

For some time the plan of campaign and the operations of the army of the Sambre and Meuse had been signed and sent to General Jourdan, who had, by the way, visited the committee a few days after the Toulon affair. Saint-Just and Lebas had been named the people's representatives with the armies of the Sambre and Meuse and the North by the Committee of Public Safety; they were to supervise and accelerate these military operations. But they still lingered in Paris till a few days before the battle of Fleurus; they pretended to be waiting until all the necessary stores were despatched. The two principal necessaries were powder and brandy, which were sent to the Sambre.

After one of my reports a huge powder manufactory was founded at Grenelle. Under the direction

of Chaptal, and with the supervision of a commission under MM. Bertholet, Guiton-Morveau, Monge, and others, a chemical process was adopted there which in twenty-four hours (by hand-mills) gave a result which by the ordinary method would have taken six months to produce. Without this process France could not have produced powder enough for one army, and she had to provide for fourteen. Without this rapid method the battle of Fleurus could not have been fought: the army of the Sambre and Meuse had no ammunition, and it was only a few days before this famous encounter that the important convoy left Paris.

Bill of Exchange from Vienna—A Deputy's Speculation in Public Securities.

At the time these military events were pending, two very singular facts happened at night in the midst of the committee. The first had to do with a celebrated and upright banker, M. Perregaux. I saw him brought to the Committee of Public Safety by the gendarmes at two in the morning. The Committee of General Surety had arrested him, because in the foreign mails was found a bill of exchange drawn from Vienna on Paris in favour of a member of the Convention. M. Perregaux proved he acted as banker and not as agent, and that he could not account for the motives and intentions of those who drew bills on him. Cambon was called from the Finance Committee, he examined the letter and the bill, and gave his evidence in favour of M. Perregaux. I had known this loyal citizen for a long time, and I supported Cambon's opinion; we answered for his good

principles, and he was at once discharged. The bill of exchange only served to confirm suspicions that had arisen as to the means of corruption and intrigue employed in Paris by an Austrian agent, the Count de Proly.

As to the second fact, this concerned a member of the Convention who, having been sent on a mission to the northern army, tried to speculate with the contents of the military money-chest in the name of his father-in-law. This deputy came from the Aube, and that is all I can say here; for although he was, by what followed and at the time of my banishment, my most determined enemy, I do not wish to name him. This would inflict on him an ineradicable stigma, and I have no idea in writing these contemporary memoirs to create scandal. The deputy had taken one hundred thousand francs belonging to the nation, and had employed his father-in-law to purchase cattle for the rations of the northern army with this sum. Such a transaction was undoubtedly nefarious, because it involved the embezzlement of the money or assignats destined for the pay of the army. But policemen were stationed in the suburbs of the capital with orders to search the messengers coming to Paris. At midnight the policeman on the northern road arrested the messenger who had been sent by the representative to this army, and he found on him a parcel containing a hundred thousand francs addressed to an unknown person. The policeman referred the matter to the committee, and it was discovered from the intercepted correspondence that the writer informed his father-in-law of his speedy return to Paris.

The committee awaited the deputy's return, and

two days afterwards he was summoned to account for his conduct.

Powder Transports detained at the City Boundary—Analysis of the Brandy sent to the Sambre and Meuse Army.

One evening, about ten o'clock, the soldiers who were convoying the powder waggons from the Grenelle manufactory found themselves stopped at the Saint-Denis barrier, under the pretext that the munitions in Paris must not be decreased. Nothing must pass, they said, without superior orders. Carnot and Prieur made a report of these facts to the committee, who were astonished, and tried to find out the secret motives for such a step, and sent to the barrier guard an order not to raise such obstacles against the transport of munitions. This was only the prelude to a nearly similar scene which happened on the morrow. At one o'clock in the morning, Saint-Just and Lebas entered the committee, holding in their hands two bottles which held samples of the brandy sent to the Sambre and Meuse army.

A few leagues from Paris a commissary-general gave orders for this brandy to be analysed, which he was told was diluted and adulterated; and, indeed, it looked very thick and of a grey tint. Saint-Just and Lebas feared that, by poisoning the men, the impending operations of the army would be prejudiced. This opinion alarmed us; and Prieur, who had special charge of the work of the celebrated chemists who aided the committee with regard to arms, powder, saltpetre, and so on, went at once to these gentlemen. He took Monge and Guiton-Morveau with him, who shared the fears of Saint-Just, and they were directed

to proceed immediately to their laboratory, which was situated near the committee-room, and test these two bottles of brandy. They returned in an hour with the report of their analysis, and with a yellow, earthy residuum found in the brandy, which they had clarified. They declared this was merely mud or muddy water taken from some ditch on the road, with which the carters had filled the barrels after filching a few pints of liquor. At the same time, to complete the examination, Monge and Guiton drank a small glass of the brandy, and offered some to the members of the committee.

After these two incidents, attributed to a powerful and invisible source which had endeavoured to paralyse the strength of the army that was opposed to the Austrians, the committee ordered Saint-Just and Lebas to return to their posts that night, and made them responsible for any ill effects occasioned by their absence; so they went off. A few days after the battle of Fleurus was gained; a memorable day indeed, having an extraordinary influence on public opinion and on the spirits of the Parisians.

Saint-Just, and my Report on the Battle of Fleurus.

Saint-Just reached the committee before the officers who carried the Austrian standards sent by the army to the Convention and the despatches of Jourdan, commanding-in-chief. To supplement these despatches, I consulted the general officers, I noted the principal details of the day, and thus wrote my report on the table of the deliberative chamber of the committee. The Assembly was impatiently awaiting this communication. Then I begged Saint-Just, who was present at the battle, to take the commander's reports

and himself relate what he had seen. But he persistently refused, saying, as he gave me certain details, "All is in General Jourdan's letter, and that is all that need be said." He was self-absorbed and seemed discontented. I took no notice; I was obliged to interrogate the valiant officers, and from them I heard of many details and acts of bravery of which the correspondence said nothing. After this explanation which they gave me, I compiled a report which fully satisfied the National Convention and the public.

Diplomatic Document on the Partition of France drawn up by the Coalition in 1794.

Fresh agitation was provoked in the committee by the arrival of a large parcel which one of our cruisers in the Mediterranean had found on a Neapolitan galley bound for Carthagena. This parcel, sent from Toulon, enclosed diplomatic documents and papers of the highest importance, for they treated of the partition of France between the allied powers. Our enemies wished to partition our territory, as had been already done in Italy, where small states were apportioned to Austria and Spain, and as, in later times, Poland had been divided amongst Russia, Austria, and Prussia.

The committee studied these papers. There was found among them (1) the treaty of Pilnitz, signed by England, Prussia, Saxony, Austria, and Naples (this paper was then going to Naples to be signed by Charles III., King of Spain); (2) instructions amplifying the clauses of the treaty of Pilnitz, the means of carrying it out, and the co-operation of each of the allied and partitioning powers; (3) a general map of Europe, engraved in London, in which the engraver

had left in blank the space occupied by France, as if to recall what Pitt had said in the House, that France was henceforth effaced from the political and commercial world; (4) a map of France whereon were engraved the various portions which each power was to have.

These partitions were distinguished by different colours. Austria took Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche-Comté. Prussia took Flanders and the land contiguous to the Meuse and Moselle. England was satisfied with the sea-front from old Aquitaine to Belgium. Spain and Portugal shared the southern provinces; Roussillon and Navarre were specially allotted to Spain. Piedmont also had its share. Finally, the heart of France, torn asunder in this sad hypothesis by civil war, humiliated and abased, was given over to the old dynasty, or to the first usurper whom audacity and fate favoured.

The cool indignation with which the committee feigned to regard these insolent threats caused me to remark whether it was considered politic or necessary to lay such a mad scheme before the Convention. The committee gave me the custody of these papers, and declared that, on the report of some decisive victory, this plan of partition, conceived and signed at Pilnitz, should be added to it as a supplement. I put the papers in my portfolio, and thus kept this good opportunity in reserve to stir up public opinion by showing Frenchmen this evidence of the jealousy and ambition of the cabinets of Europe.

About this time a Mr. Lewis Goldsmith, who had learned in London of these hateful and extravagant suggestions which had been made by Pitt to the prejudice of the integrity of our territory, published a very

curious work on the subject, and this book was very largely circulated in England, among his countrymen, who do not adopt the wild and ambitious plans of their government either blindly, by order, or by the advice of the newspapers, as is done in France. Mr. Lewis Goldsmith's pamphlet was intituled "Cabinet Crimes," and appeared both in English and French. Both editions were quickly sold out.

Singular Conduct of Hérault de Séchelles—How he used the Despatches of the Coalition—He desires to undertake a Mission.

The discovery of these official papers of the Coalition caused much excitement among the members of the Convention. They all asked me for a detailed report on them. But while I was awaiting a favourable chance to record historically the criminal intentions of our enemies, Hérault de Séchelles, who seemed simply curious to see these despatches with their royal and imperial signatures, asked me to lend him the portfolio. I was then ignorant of the dangerous intimacy between this deputy (who was too trustful or too weak to be a statesman) and the Count de Proly, the natural son of Baron Thugut, the Austrian minister. This intimacy only became evident by what followed. Hérault de Séchelles was imprudent enough to show these diplomatic documents to his friend. I asked him several times for their return. Each time he assured me he was just about to bring them before the committee. He added that, as I was so hard at work and had so many reports to make, he would willingly undertake the task of doing everything connected with the eventual partition of France.

I explained to him the order of the committee, who had entrusted this important report to my sole charge. It was necessary, I said, to show Europe, even if victorious (which we did not fear), that the integrity of France could not be destroyed, even for three years; that the French people, accustomed to exist under the same federation of provinces, and under the same government, would never remain long under a foreign yoke, or under a conqueror's domination. In fact, France, free, powerful, and united, would be a first-class power, and an actual necessity among the general federation of European nations. "I had thought of bringing out all that," Hérault replied, simply, "and I have already started on the work." I insisted that the papers should be given up to the committee through me. In return he only made fruitless promises. Other events were necessary to prove to him the necessity of being faithful to his engagements; but these were very painful to my excellent colleague. As for me, I never ceased advising him, and afterwards condoled with him when the Committee of General Surety accused him of intriguing with Proly. Up to the moment of his arrest I never suspected him of any false step, still less of a nefarious action. Before anyone thought of accusing him, he came to the committee to beg that I would intercede for his having a mission to Huningue and the department of the Upper Rhine. He was tired, he said, of the monotonous work in the Convention. I applied therefore for this post that evening, after having observed there was no pressing cause for the committee sending an envoy to Huningue, as General Pichegru was already there, under observation, because

of the vicinity of the Prince de Condé and a large body of emigrants. "All right, I will take notes," he added, "and the aim of my mission will be useful."

The Committee of General Surety accuses him.

It is true the proposition of Hérault de Séchelles which I brought forward astonished the members, but it was nevertheless agreed to. Nothing more was thought of it, when M. Backer, if I recollect aright, one of our representatives in the cantons, wrote us that Hérault de Séchelles had remained for a very short time in Huningue and had gone on to Basle, where he had a lengthened conference with the French ambassador, M. Barthélemy; that no doubt the envoy was acting in concert with the committee, but, nevertheless, he thought it his duty to mention the facts in his diplomatic reports.

This communication aroused our attention as to Hérault de Séchelles' mission to Huningue. The Committee of Public Safety was informed that he had received a former commissary of war at his house. This fact was published on the return of Hérault de Séchelles to Paris. Besides, a large number of boxes filled with diplomatic documents were found at his lodgings, which had been brought there, as he said, by a chief clerk of the office of the Committee of Public Safety, in order that they might be gone over: he, in concert with myself, being charged with this department of the administration.

The Committee of General Surety had already caused the refugee to be arrested. Hérault de Séchelles appealed to the committee, who asked me why the Foreign Office boxes should have left the office, out of

the control of the members. I replied that the facts connected with this transfer were utterly unknown to me. And the committee, to get at the truth, interrogated the chief clerk, who was a very honest man. His name was Maudru, and he enjoyed a deserved reputation for frankness and loyalty; he was sixty years of age. On being requested to relate what had happened, this clerk testified that for more than a month I had not been once to the diplomatic office, occupied as I was with my numerous reports. But before his departure for the Upper Rhine, Hérault de Séchelles ordered that the various boxes containing documents relative to foreign affairs should be taken to his house. This was done, as M. Maudru heard him add that he had no time to go over the documents except at home.

It was afterwards learnt, from the testimony of Hérault's servants, that Proly, the Austrian, came every day and spent several hours with their master. This fact elucidated the motive for the transfer of these boxes, and how the abstraction of the papers of the English government as to the treaty of Pilnitz, and other documents and instructions relative to the partition of France, was managed.

I felt only too strongly at this moment how much my connection with Hérault de Séchelles and his nefarious conduct implicated me at a time when suspicions and accusations rained on every head. But the committee hastened to assure me that it was always satisfied with my conduct and the work I did, which infused fresh zeal into me.

Meritorious Actions — The Condemned Men at Orleans — Delville, Deputy of the Eure.

An occasion soon came to serve humanity, and I eagerly seized it. Several respectable merchants and citizens of Orleans had been condemned to death. Their offence was that they had insulted, at a national meeting, the person of deputy Bourdon, who had much better have shown himself less irascible and more generous before seeking justice for this offence. The former Bishop of Orleans (De Jarente), whom I often saw at my friend's, M. d'Allet de Villeneuve, treasurer of the city of Paris, came to ask me if I would speak to the president of the Convention, to admit a deputation from Orleans to the bar, among them the relatives of the condemned men. Jarente himself would read the petition for a reversal of the judgment. I desired nothing better than to soften the evils of the Revolution (for which tardy justice will be done me later), so I took up the matter warmly. The president agreed to hear the petitioners and to have them favourably received. M. de Jarente made people feel an interest in the unfortunate men. The Assembly was not ill-disposed, and I was about to support the petition, when several strident voices demanded that we should proceed with the previous question.

A member of the Convention, the deputy of the Eure, named Philip Delville, was luckier than the war commissary, a refugee, found in Hérault de Séchelles' room. He had been outlawed as having evaded the decree of arrest of the sixty-three deputies, and hidden himself in Paris. One day I dined with him at my friend M. de Normandie's house, the registrar-general; this gentleman had invited me,

without letting me know Philip Delville was there. When the dinner hour arrived there were several guests, and M. de Normandie went and warned the refugee that I was in the parlour, and that he need not appear if my presence gave him any uneasiness. "No, no," replied Delville; "I know Barère's character and principles; he is incapable of hurting me in any way."[1]

After this reply, M. de Normandie placed me next his friend at table. I shook hands with him, as a sign of my interest in, and pity for, his misfortunes; and he seemed thankful. The presence of so many guests, at first, prevented me from saying more; but after dinner, when we went into the drawing-room for coffee, I spoke more freely. "Do not show yourself so much, my worthy colleague," I said to him; "with me you run no risk; but there are others who might recognise you. Be easy; I have not seen you, or rather, I take your side in a position which one day may be my own." Delville shook me by the hand, saying, "I said to De Normandie that I knew and trusted in you." Delville did not return to the Convention until November, with the sixty-three deputies; thus he spent six months of proscription without danger. Ah! if I had been able to save or cause my other unfortunate colleagues to have been forgotten! God is my witness, I would have made every effort to that end!

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[1] In the *Moniteur* of the end of February or the beginning of March can be read the speech made by M. Delville at the tribune at the time of my accusation. I never thought he would mention this incident, and I never asked him not to do so. His conscience made him speak, at the same time, of my behaviour to him when he was in trouble.

Robespierre's Saying on Saint-Just—Saint-Just's Advice to Robespierre.

After his return from Fleurus, Saint-Just remained some time in Paris, although his mission as representative to the armies of the Sambre and Meuse and the Rhine and Moselle was unfinished. The campaign was only beginning, but he had several projects in hand, and he stayed in committee, or rather in his office, where he was always absorbed and thoughtful. Robespierre, in speaking of him in committee, said familiarly, as if speaking of an intimate friend, "Saint-Just is silent and observant; but I have noticed, in his personality, he has a great likeness to Charles IX." This did not flatter Saint-Just, who was a deeper and cleverer revolutionist than Robespierre. One day, when the former was angry about several legislative propositions or decrees that did not please him, Saint-Just said to him, "Be calm; it is the phlegmatic who govern."

Saint-Just proposes to make the Nobles do Work on the Highways.

Saint-Just had such indifference that, about this time, he came one evening to propose to the committee a strange means of promptly ending the struggle of the revolution against the suspected and imprisoned nobles. These were his words: "For a thousand years the nobility have been oppressing the French nation with exactions and feudal vexations of every kind; feudalism and nobility exist no longer; you want to repair all the frontier roads for the passage of the artillery, convoys, and transports of our army; order the imprisoned nobles to go to work daily and mend the highways."

The truth must be told, and justice rendered to whom it is due; when this writing appears I shall be in my tomb, I shall be suspected neither of lies nor flattery at that time, when probably none of the Committee of Public Safety will survive. When Saint-Just had finished there was a movement of silent indignation amongst us all, succeeded by a unanimous demand for the order of the day. I thought I ought to stipulate for the national character by saying to Saint-Just and the committee that we should be opposed to such a kind of punishment for prisoners even if the law pronounced it; that the nobility could be abolished by wise laws, but that the nobles always preserved in the mass of the people a rank, a distinction due to education, which prevented us from acting at Paris as Marius did at Rome.

"Ah!" exclaimed Saint-Just, "Marius was more politic and a greater statesman than you will ever be. I wished to try the strength, the temperament, and the opinion of the Committee of Public Safety. You are not fit to combat nobility, since you cannot destroy it; it will devour the Revolution and the revolutionists. I retire from the committee."

He quickly withdrew, and set out for the army, until the moment when he thought himself capable of executing vaster projects with Robespierre, Couthon, and Lebas, his associates.

Saint-Just denounces Hoche in the Committee—Debates between this General and Pichegru.

When he returned to the camp, Saint-Just ordered and exercised military dictatorship. He did not hesitate to denounce General Hoche for following his own

ideas, and not the plans prescribed by the committee and carried by the representatives on missions. This general seemed, in fact, to be always outside the line, and knew not how to obey, but he commanded with as much audacity as talent. At the head of the army of the Rhine and Moselle, he was the rival and perhaps the enemy of Pichegru, his neighbour, in command of the army of the Upper Rhine. The debates between the two generals, heightened by the absolute orders of Saint-Just, at last aroused the attention of the committee on the motives of conduct so little conformable to the interests of the public defence. Hoche highly suspected the intentions of Pichegru, who, he said, was in secret communication with the Prince de Condé. Pichegru said he would not obey Hoche's orders nor co-operate in his successes, nor in the execution of his plans. The quarrels were carried to such a pitch of exasperation and rivalry that Saint-Just decided to arrest Hoche and send him to the Committee of Public Safety, and handed over all the correspondence of the two generals, whether between themselves, or with the two representatives, Saint-Just and Lebas.

The result of this was that Hoche, faithful to his fatherland, but absolute in his will, and affecting independence in regard to the plans of the committee, was detained several months in the Luxembourg, whilst the traitor Pichegru was recalled from his command, and put at the head of the army then entering Belgium.

Pichegru, sent into Belgium, obeys with difficulty—His Communications with the Reactionists.

In this circumstance the Committee of Public Safety did not act with the knowledge of the truth

which was acquired only after 1794, for it would have been a crime on its part; but it was irritated with the disobedience, the pride, and hateful rivalry of Hoche. On the other hand, it was very far from thinking that Pichegru, who had been raised from the rank of simple gunner to the position of general-in-chief, would betray the Republic and deceive the government which had thus raised him to a rank to which his education and means forbade him to aspire.

Yet a simple incident enlightened us in a moment about that general, and sufficiently to make it urgent for us to withdraw him from the Upper Rhine and to send him away into countries on the coast. I knew the details of this affair better than anyone, because I was charged to write to Pichegru. In a very brief letter the committee gave him a formal order to go and take up the command in Belgium, and quit the command of the army of the Upper Rhine on the receipt of the letter.

Naturally cold and obstinate, Pichegru replied that he could not leave his army after the calumnies Hoche had spread about him; that his honour forbade him obeying such orders before receiving justice for the imputations sown against him in his army and in that of the Sambre and Meuse.

The committee said to him, in a second laconic letter: "General, the committee repeats to you for the last time the order to go and command in Belgium at the head of the forces assigned to you; nothing can excuse you from obeying; the committee will deal with your calumniators and enemies. If on the day of the receipt of this order you do not set out,

the committee will take other measures against you." Pichegru obeyed, and the plots to open the frontiers of the Upper Rhine were at least adjourned. It will be seen from the result of the events that the opinions of Pichegru and his communications were known to the reactionary party of the Convention, which preserved the profoundest silence till it could raise its head and crush the Republic. What general did the reactionists of 1794 call, in preference to all others, to Paris in February, 1795? Pichegru, though then engaged in the conquest of Holland. But everything had to yield to the want of having at the head of the armed reaction a general animated by the same opinion as the reactionists. To this opinion we must add these communications which went on for some time with the Prince de Condé and the emigrants—communications since confirmed by the correspondence of Klinglin which was seized in the year V. by the Directory (September, 1797), and by all Pichegru's after-conduct, both before the 18th of Fructidor, and later in England, and with Moreau in Paris in 1803.

Carnot interrogates General Hoche for the Committee of Public Safety, and shields him from Saint-Just's hatred.[1]

In the army of the Rhine and Moselle, Saint-Just and Lebas had very keen contentions with General Hoche, a brave patriot, who complained of the obstacles Pichegru designedly raised, as commander of the army of the Upper Rhine, to prevent the plans of campaign sent by the committee being carried out. Doubtless Saint-Just and Lebas did not yet suspect

[1] Inserted fragment.

the perfidious conduct of Pichegru, whose secret communication with the Prince de Condé on the other side of the Rhine was not known till long afterwards from the memoirs of the emigrants; they showed much mistrust and hostility of the brave, faithful Hoche. In a very malevolent report they wrote to the committee that it was urgent to change the commander-in-chief of the army of the Rhine and Moselle, and that in consequence they thought it their duty to arrest Hoche and send him to the committee to give an account of his conduct.

Hoche was arrested and brought to Paris; the two representatives arrived at the same time. Carnot was told to interrogate the accused. After having heard his replies, he reported to the committee that Hoche had refused to carry out some parts of the plan of campaign, not wishing to expose the safety of the army and his own responsibility, in concert with Pichegru, a man as tortuous and recalcitrant in conduct as he had shown himself on several occasions.

Carnot added that this affair deserved a more serious examination; but in the meantime, for General Hoche's safety, he must be kept in the Luxembourg prison, and not exposed to the shock of certain passions.

Saint-Just thus saw a brave general whom he disliked escape his denunciation. Saint-Just never pardoned. To make the detained forgotten was at this time a certain means of saving them. Immediately after the 9th of Thermidor Hoche regained his liberty.

I relax the Effects of the Law of the 21st of Germinal against the Nobles—The Register of Requisitions.

I lately spoke of the violent measures Saint-Just wished the committee to adopt against the nobles and relatives of the emigrants who were detained in the different prisons by the law of suspects. I have said how I thought it my duty to oppose the proposal of this second Marius, persuaded that, the nobility being no longer an order in the State, its members ought to be treated just as other citizens and punished by the same laws, if they were judged guilty.

When the law of the 21st of Germinal, year II. (March, 1794), struck a blow at the nobles who were in Paris, and forced them to depart without delay and put themselves under surveillance in the neighbouring communes, the committee, on my demand accompanied by a hundred petitions, relaxed the effect of this hard injunction by putting under requisition the nobles who could be useful to the administration, public instruction, to the academies, sciences, letters, and arts. Consequently I put up a great register in one of the halls of the committee, and I forwarded more than six thousand requisitions on the slightest causes, and for motives of any utility whatsoever. This register still exists in the archives of the Committee of Public Safety, which have been deposited in the great collection that M. Daunou watches over in the Hôtel de Soubise. I did all that, though I have never defended privileges that might be abused, and know that the privileges of the nobles were most onerous on the nation. It is by this means that I saved, for example, the life of M. de Paraza, the Speaker of the Toulouse Parliament, a very learned man

and one thoroughly versed in classical and national literature. M. de Châteauneuf, the author of the biography of the generals and the distinguished soldiers of the armies of the Republic, often asked me for requisitions for men and women of letters, and he always obtained them. I extended the requisitions to the theatres, where I preserved several young artistes whom the law of conscription would have snatched from the dramatic or lyric stage. Several nobles had taken refuge in the correspondence and public instruction offices. I preserved this refuge for them from which the law of the 21st of Germinal was expelling them.

Saint-Just's Complaints.

This tyrannical law was the work of Saint-Just. Consult the *Moniteur* of the 22nd of Germinal, where it is reported with the explanation of his motives, and you will see that, if there had been no committee, Saint-Just would have used his power with as much dictatorial fanaticism as did Marius, that great enemy of the Roman aristocracy. Robespierre's friend never forgave me for having diminished the force of this blow. Whilst I was at the tribune of the Convention, he came, with someone unknown, and perused my register of requisitions. He took down certain names, and some days after, towards midnight, Robespierre and Saint-Just entered the committee, where they did not usually come (for they worked in a private office, under pretext that their duties were completely private). A few moments after their entry Saint-Just complained of the abuse I had made of the requisitions, which had been granted, said he, in such profusion that the law of the 21st of Germinal had become null and void.

The Parisian Shopkeeper who would be a Noble and be banished from Paris.

In the midst of these severe measures that were taken against the nobility, there occurred in my presence, in the Rue Saint-Honoré, at the Hôtel de Savalette, a scene which might be claimed by the comic authors. A good Parisian, Du Marais, son of an alderman of Paris, came and consulted me to know if he should leave the capital, and place himself under surveillance at Passy. I replied that his nobility was not the feudal nobility which had lost all at the Revolution, and on which the suspicions of the legislator had fallen. But the *bourgeois* insisted on being included in the law. I insisted, in turn, that he should remain in Paris with his family, telling him that modern nobility was in no way threatened. Then the alderman's son grows angry before a numerous assembly; he speaks loudly; he says he is as noble as any other in France, that the title of alderman gives a recognised hereditary nobility. With the view to calming him, and feigning to adopt the legitimacy of his aristocratic pride, I offered to give him a requisition as a noble literary man who was authorised to remain at Paris. "No, sir," said he, "I am not a man of letters. I am the son of an alderman of Paris. I ought to leave, I will leave Paris, according to the law." He retired in high dudgeon.

Saint-Just's Accusation of me.

It is the inherent vice of bad laws, and, above all, of penal laws devoid of motive, which attack a great number of innocent people, to nullify themselves. Saint-Just did not understand that. He attacked me,

and accused me of having put under requisition the relatives of several emigrants whilst the law punished them in their property. The committee appeared struck by this accusation, and asked him to explain himself and name some of the relations. He named several, but they were all unknown to us. He afterwards named Mademoiselle d'Avisard, of Toulouse, whose father was abroad. Here I replied that the fate of this innocent girl, who was but sixteen years of age, and obliged by the terrible laws against emigrants to subsist at Paris by manual labour, for she was then engaged in making gaiters for our soldiers, was in the highest degree worthy of compassion and interest. At Toulouse I had known her family, one of the most distinguished of the parliament, and I added that, in the eyes of every man who had known Languedoc, the name of her grandfather, M. Riquet de Bonrepos, co-proprietor of the celebrated canal of Languedoc, and a celebrated magistrate, ought to be a title to pity and special protection for his grand-daughter; the Committee of Public Safety thought this explanation sufficient. It saw that it was only a wicked recrimination by Saint-Just, supported by the presence of Robespierre. Divisions were then beginning to form in the midst of our council. Saint-Just, Couthon, and Robespierre were observed to be constituting a kind of triumvirate, which concerted and took measures to break forth at the proper time, and take possession of the power of the committee as soon as they had succeeded in discrediting it, and rendering it suspected even by the Convention, and when they could dispense with its information and its work.

Dufourny attacks me at the Jacobin Club—My Case adjourned on Robespierre's Proposal.

In the journals of the Jacobins and in the journal of the Mountain will be found the homicidal motion made at this time against me by one named Dufourny, president of the department of the Seine, an exaggerated patriot, a savage and peevish demagogue, who never spared his victim. He had signalised me for a long time as a dangerous aristocrat in the midst of the Committee of Public Safety, of whom it should be freed. The newspapers of the time will also show that Robespierre hypocritically supported Dufourny's motion, tending to impeach me sooner. Robespierre resumed by saying that this opinion of me might have some foundation, but that it was necessary to wait some days; that they still wanted my work and some reports, in order to arrive the better at the proposed end. My case was then adjourned, and on entering the committee the following morning, Carnot, who was attentively reading the account of the meetings of the Jacobin Club, came to me and said, "You will soon be impeached, you are marked by the Jacobins, but it is adjourned."

"I am going to continue," said I, "to merit the hatred of my accusers. Let us work for our country." I had to prepare my reports for that day.

The Proconsuls—Dubois-Crancé.

This epoch of 1794 was so fruitful in events and excesses produced by the representatives on missions in the departments, that I had occasion to revoke some of these representatives. Such were Dubois-Crancé and Albitte, who had been sent to Lyons to

calm that city and reconcile it with the Republic, and not to cause it to revolt and find an occasion for treating the inhabitants with military severity, when they were estranged, or rather exasperated, by the events previous to the siege.

To be equitable, history must carefully distinguish between the representatives in the departments and the representatives with the armies: the first were murderous, despotic, atrocious; the second were useful, brave, and patriotic. The deputies who were sent into the departments thought themselves the Convention. They were like Verres, Roman proconsuls, such as the capital of the world had produced in its time of anarchy and corruption. They inflicted punishment as they liked; they arrested patriots and aristocrats pell-mell, and often on slight motives; their order pronounced death arbitrarily; they usurped the legislative power and united it to the executive power, and even to the judicial power, since they directed and influenced the operations of the criminal and revolutionary tribunals, created suspects, and established commissions. In a word, these men caused the Convention, the Committee of Public Safety, and liberty to be execrated.

It appeared to me, from the Lyons correspondence which was read to the committee, that Dubois-Crancé could have avoided that terrible extremity of hostility and a siege, as if the people of Lyons were enemies and foreigners. Robert Lindet, in spite of his wisdom and his conciliatory manner, had failed to bring about this essential union of Lyons and Paris in June, 1793; and in the spring of 1794 Dubois-Crancé, by his severe and haughty manners, by his extravagant

demands, broke all the national bonds which united the industrious people of Lyons and the government of free France. I proposed to recall him and to send in his place a more peaceful representative. Dubois knew this, and came in haste to insult me openly in the committee. I defended my opinion, relying on the correspondence and on the unanimous wish of the committee. The proconsul was not absolved from his faults, but he awaited the moment when he could attack me in the Convention and revenge himself on my sincerity and on my pleading for the people of Lyons.

This occasion occurred when the reactionists of the Convention met in December, 1794, and January, 1795. Then, of all the members of the committee, I was the only one whom Dubois-Crancé attacked in his speeches and motions. I was the only one worthy of his anger. In defence, I was compelled to compose a pamphlet specially directed against him.

Barras and Fréron—their Ingratitude.

There are still two representatives whose undeserved hatred has been very fatal to me. Barras and Fréron, sent to the South, had organised the troubles and vexations at Marseilles. They had called this city "the nameless commune"; they were celebrated by their only too famous fusillades. The committee was obliged to recall them to Paris and refused to receive them. Their actions were too self-accusing; but the committee, wishing to put an end to these fatal impeachments of representatives, preferred to revoke rather than accuse. Fréron and Barras thought themselves proscribed; they were only disapproved. They

came every evening into the lobby of the committee. They spoke to me constantly, and I endeavoured to console them for this sort of disgrace and recall. I asked them even to tell me their line of defence and the justification of their commands and conduct; they did so, and I alone listened to them. Nevertheless, when the 9th of Thermidor had freed them from the fear of being accused by Robespierre and Saint-Just, who had marked eighteen of these representatives as exaggerated and contra-revolutionary by their excesses, they conspired against me, forgetting what I had done in their favour. Fréron defamed me daily in his *Orator of the People*, and Barras tried to assassinate me on the 13th of Germinal, year III., in the Rue Saint-Honoré, as I will explain when I come to the events of that time (1795).

I receive a Letter from Switzerland beseeching me to save the Dauphin.

One would think that this spring of 1794, during which I accomplished so much work, would be the period when it would be most misconstrued. One evening, about eleven o'clock, a letter with a Swiss postmark arrived for me at the Convention during the deliberation. It was accompanied by several other letters from Paris and the departments. The foreign stamp having attracted my attention, I opened the letter at once. What was my astonishment! This letter, signed with a very well-known name, implored me, after praising my energy and political influence, to signalise my devotion in a very remarkable manner for France and the blood of its King. The honourable correspondent said that they relied on me on the

other side of the Rhine, and that if I would go, as it was perfectly possible for a man in power to do, and take the son of Louis XVI. from the Temple, and lead him to Basle, my glory and fortune would be at its height; that I could expect anything from so generous and magnanimous a prince as the reward of so fine an action.

I thought I was dreaming. I re-read this missive. I examined its authenticity. I saw the address. It was for me. The letter and signature were genuine. It contained positive proofs.

At that time of suspicion and easy accusations, I conceived that some ill-intentioned person, or some secret enemy, had conceived the plan of compromising me, or accusing me of treason, by means of this letter, which could have been intercepted or seized at the post-office by the very suspicious commissioners who were charged to examine correspondence going or coming from foreign parts. I immediately resolved, to prevent all suspicion or calumny, to give this letter to the Committee of Public Safety. I gave the communication to my colleagues. They paid no great attention to it, being persuaded that it was a trick employed by some emigrant to bring me under suspicion. They advised me to deposit the letter with the Committee of General Surety, that it might investigate its authenticity or discover its concealed snare. "In that case," said I, "I will write on the back of the letter the date of its receipt and the motive of the deposit, with the proof of delivery to the Committee of General Surety, which shall be signed by two members of the Committee of Public Safety, and by me." That was instantly done. It will appear later

on how right my forecast was, and that no human precaution can guarantee us from the attacks of hatred and bad faith.

As I shall prove in the course of these Memoirs, at the time of my accusation, in 1794, the new members of the Committee of General Surety, such as André Dumont, Clauzel, and Pémartin, were indelicate enough to charge me with this letter which I had delivered to them. But their hatred prevented them from reading on the back the proof of its deposit, stating that it was I myself who had disclosed it.

Bonaparte accused by the People of Marseilles.

Speaking of Marseilles, I ought not to omit an interesting fact, since it helps to make known this Corsican captain, then general of a brigade of artillery, at the siege of Toulon. The committee had sent him to Marseilles, with General Lapoype, to organise the defence of that town against the English cruisers, which disturbed the tranquillity of the inhabitants and government very much.

As soon as Bonaparte arrived, he commenced the works necessary to raise the fort which commands the city from its ruins, and which the inhabitants had demolished in imitation of the Parisians of the 14th of July, 1789. When the people of Marseilles saw this new bastille being rebuilt, they hastened to denounce the two generals to the Convention. This petition, written in a very vehement style, produced such an effect at the Assembly, before which the deputies from Marseilles presented themselves, that several demanded the return of Lapoype and Bona-

parte to the revolutionary tribunal. The preponderating opinion was to return the petition for examination by the Committee of Public Safety. In the meanwhile the two accused were summoned to the bar with the briefest delay by the same decree. This decree was immediately carried to the committee, which was completely ignorant of the facts and denunciation.

A courier having gone to inform Lapoype, he came in a few days to Paris and explained the facts to the committee. As to Bonaparte, who alone appeared chargeable with having raised the walls and repaired the fort of Marseilles, his colleague justified him by saying that his only thought was to complete the defence of the city against the English. The same courier who carried the order to Marseilles against the two generals also took an order from the committee, at Carnot's instigation, telling Bonaparte to establish a certain number of batteries along the coast from Marseilles to Cette to protect the ports threatened by the English. This measure utilised the services of the young general of brigade, drew him from Marseilles, where he was denounced and hated, and perhaps saved him from the accusations which the deputation of Marseilles would have renewed if he presented himself at the bar.

Lapoype alone came. I afterwards spoke (by order of the committee) to clear up the whole matter and announce that Bonaparte, who did not come to the bar, was usefully employed in the defence of the Mediterranean coasts. The Assembly passed to the order of the day, since this denunciation was henceforth objectless; the works of the fort of Marseilles

had been suspended by the express order of the Committee of Public Safety.

My Efforts in Favour of the Wretched.

Whilst I was drawing up my report, to shelter these two soldiers from the attacks of the Marseillais, I tried to save the life of a very obscure man, M. Chaudron, a Paris attorney, who had been condemned to death by the revolutionary tribunal. M. and Madame Pérignon explained to me how the conduct of this public officer was free from guilt, or at least justifiable. I concerted with the Minister of Justice, Gohier, as to the means of saving him, or at least of delaying the execution, for in a revolution to gain time is to gain the case. We agreed that Gohier should send me a letter for the Convention, that I should send it to the president, and support its arguments. I did so, but without success. Revolutionary assemblies are deaf and inexorable. The Convention feared to become a tribunal of appeal, and in this mood it sacrificed the innocent or excusable man to the inflexible rigour of judgment. M. Pérignon, the celebrated advocate, still lives, as well as the ex-Minister of Justice, they can remember and attest these facts. Besides, I write Memoirs which will not be published till after my death, and I have no interest in deceiving either my contemporaries or posterity.

My Pretended Influence (June, 1794).

I used to be then every day at the tribune, proposing bills and making reports of the armies according to the deliberations and notes of the Committee of Public Safety. I was thought influential in the government and in the general administration, and

yet my friends were arrested by my side. Even my brother, who held no public office, was forced to flee from his department by Monestier of the Puy-de-Dôme, a representative on mission. At last they were about to put my own house under sequestration, on the demand of the revolutionary committee of Tarbes. Incredible as these facts seem, nothing is truer. My brother was compelled to take refuge with me; nothing could guarantee a citizen in the departments against the accusations of the ultra-revolutionists, who exceeded the zeal and even the despotism of the representatives on mission. My cousin, Jacques Barère, president of the department, had just been arrested on a vague denunciation, and my brother would have been, no doubt, if he had not come to me in Paris.

Clubs and Lilies.

The great passage in my house was decorated with the figures of hearts, diamonds, spades, and clubs. I should have been pardoned, doubtless, for the hearts, diamonds, and spades, but the clubs resembled lilies, and a formal decree had confiscated all property and articles on which these emblems were not effaced.

Some members of the revolutionary committee of Tarbes, having taken the clubs for lilies, concluded that my house, marked with this censured sign, ought to be confiscated. Well reasoned! But my brother was absent; my three sisters who stayed with me had such a terror of the revolutionary committee, that made the whole city tremble, that they went suddenly into my room and destroyed the two pictures I valued most; these were the portraits of the good Henry IV., the pride of our mountains, and of

Poniatowski, the last king of Poland. These ladies feared that confiscation would be very quickly incurred if the revolutionists had seen these portraits of the two beneficent kings. So they hastened, in spite of my attachment to them, to throw them into the fire. Those are the great benefits I reaped in the midst of the Revolution.

Portraits of Two Kings.

In 1788 I bought at Paris a beautiful portrait of Henry IV. by the celebrated Porbus. That of the King of Poland was given to me as a present by M. Mazzey, his envoy at the court of Versailles in 1789. This minister, a zealous and enlightened friend of liberty, was a noble Florentine who had assisted and co-operated with Washington in the emancipation of the United States. It was he who sent to the King of Poland the numbers of my paper, the *Point du Jour;* and the prince was so pleased with its principles that he told M. Mazzey to make me a present of one of his portraits, painted by the celebrated David. Poniatowski joined to it a flattering letter and a gold medal, with his effigy on one side, and on the other this inscription, "*Bene meritis.*" When in 1793 and 1794 the Revolution assumed its inquisitorial character, I was obliged to burn the autograph letter of the King of Poland, and to sell the gold medal to the Mint, which I much regretted, because it was the present of a king, a good man, a philosopher, and a friend of liberty.

Arrest of my Friend M. de Savalette.

What I am going to relate is still more surprising. I used to live during the Convention with M. de

Savalette de Lange, who had honoured me for a long time with his friendship, and who asked me to live in his mansion with him. In this way I was very near the place of meeting of the Convention, which assembled at the Feuillants, in the Place du Manège, where the Constituent Assembly had sat. What was my astonishment at being once startled out of sleep by M. de Savalette, accompanied by guards and members of the committee of the section of La Butte des Moulins. It was four o'clock in the morning, and I had only gone to bed at three o'clock, according to the practice which my work since the 1st of August had compelled me to follow. In fact, the Committee of Public Safety was sitting from eleven a.m. till five and sometimes six p.m. They met again at nine o'clock, and sometimes at eight, in the evening, and sat till three or even four in the morning.[1] "I am arrested," said M. de

[1] The ministers who were waiting for orders, or who had special work to do, passed the same time in the committee usually. The Secretary of the Admiralty, D'Albarade, worked most often and latest with the committee. He gave us the secret of the cruisings of the frigates which so much injured English commerce. We had commanded him, among other things, to send two frigates to intercept the English ships that were taking Thomas Muir and Margarot to Botany Bay. These heroic patriots, who had disclosed the political intrigues of the cabinet of St. James', were sentenced to transportation for this rather than for having presided at a patriotic assembly whose object was to make the democracy rise against their oppressive aristocracy. The two French frigates were of no avail. The English ships reached Botany Bay with Muir and Margarot. The latter escaped, and came to Paris under the Directory. M. Margarot, after having spent eighteen years in the colony, returned to England in 1813. He came to Paris in 1814 and 1815 on family affairs. They came from Nimes.

Savalette, "by an order carried by the members of the committee of the section." "From what authority has it emanated, and what is its motive?" "We do not know. It is from the Commune that the order has come." "Very well. Since my friend is arrested by my side, I will be this morning with M. Pache at nine o'clock, and I will see how such an injustice can be sustained." I could not close my eyes that morning after M. de Savalette set out for prison. At nine o'clock I hurried to M. Pache, the mayor and chief of the Commune; I demand the motives of the arrest; I prove their injustice; and I declare that I shall be able to discover this plot. Pache, convinced that this act is arbitrary, gives me his word that he will go to the assembly of the Commune at noon, and that M. de Savalette will be delivered to me at noon. I count on it, and I go and complain to the Committee of Public Safety that the Commune of Paris disorganises, by its orders of arrest, the work of the National Treasury by imprisoning one of the five national commissioners of the treasury. M. de Savalette had been nominated to this office in 1791.

M. Pache kept his word. The same day, at two o'clock, my friend came to the committee to embrace and thank me, as if I ought not to have found in my heart the reward of this action.

Credit on the Count d'Artois.

On that evening I wished to know from M. de Savalette what he had learned as to the cause of his arrest. Here is what he told me:

"Your friendship for me went to the extent of not fearing to compromise yourself in asking the Com-

mittee of Finance to pay my credit on the Count d'Artois. All my bills were right, and my credit quite legitimate before any law on emigration was passed. You have besides urged MM. Cambon and Ramel, the members of this Committee of Finance, to verify my credit, and get a report made on it to the Convention. You have done still more; that is, to prevent the attorney who had negotiated this loan of five millions for the Count d'Artois, and his Councillor of Finance, from being given up to judgment, or molested in any way, as two other attorneys had been, Dufresnoy and his colleague, for the loan of four millions for the Duke of Orleans.

"Now my enemies—and I know them well—try to ruin me, and to drive me to bankruptcy towards my numerous creditors, by preventing the nation from paying me these five millions.

"Not having succeeded in preventing the Committee of Finance from reserving this question until a more favourable time, and giving me at least some hope to calm my creditors, they denounced me as a suspect. I have lent, they said, five millions to the Count d'Artois, to assist him to emigrate and excite foreign powers against France. These are the motives of my arrest."

These facts are entirely correct, and so well known in Paris that the attorney Pérignon heard them repeated by M. de Verdun, ex-farmer-general and councillor of finance of M. d'Artois, in July, 1814. At that time M. de Verdun informed M. d'Artois of them, at a meeting of his Council of Finance, at which there was a question of repaying the loan demanded by the heirs of M. de Savalette de Lange.

The prince who, like all the Bourbons, regarded me as a man of revolution and hatred, appeared astonished that in 1794 I had tried to save the life of this notary and of his chief financier. He clasped M. de Verdun's hand and said, "Is it indeed true?" M. de Verdun insisted on the facts, and invoked the testimony of the notary. "I am very pleased with what you have told me. What! Barère behaved thus? I am very glad to hear of it." Having heard these details in the summer of 1814 from the mouth of M. Pérignon, I went to M. de Verdun's house in the Rue Royale, to thank him for having spoken so well of me. Not finding him at home, I wrote him a letter thanking him. Thus, not even could the Bourbons refuse to do justice to my sentiments of humanity.

To return to my story, I calmed as far as possible my friend's affrighted imagination, and I assured him that I would speak again to Cambon and Ramel, in the Committee of Finance, to liquidate his debt, but that the matter was very difficult on account of the borrower's name. The report of M. de Savalette's arrest had produced the bad effect that such things invariably produce against those who are their object. Cambon replied that he could not present such a report to the Convention, nor a similar debt, when there were so many others, more privileged and less odious, which they did not liquidate, in the deplorable state the treasury was in, obliged to face a general war and the expense of fourteen armies.

The Arrest of the Queen's Pianist.

At this time a talented artist, named Hermann, who through curiosity and no other motive had come to one

of the meetings of the revolutionary tribunal, attracted the attention of the jurors by his elegant costume and powdered head. A certain Villate, remarkable for his revolutionary extravagance, his venality under the Frérons, and his denunciatory mania, signalised this spectator, a celebrated pianist, formerly in the service of the Queen. This title made him suspected; he is arrested before the audience, and taken immediately to the Conciergerie. On that evening, Fouquier goes and interrogates him; the artist asks for me, and says that he comes frequently to my house, that he is a musician, and has never mixed in politics, and that, besides, M. Barère could testify to his conduct and principles. On the following evening, Fouquier enters the committee, contrary to his custom (for he dealt only with the Committee of General Surety). He declares that he came expressly to be informed of the truth of a fact which one of the accused detained at the Conciergerie —— At these words the committee became attentive. Fouquier continues: "which an accused person alleges in asking for Barère, who, he said, can warrant his conduct." "It is true," said I; "the man you speak of is a celebrated pianist, who does not mix in politics; he often comes to my house, and that shows he is not an enemy of the rights of the nation; his arrest is the height of ridicule and atrocity." After my declaration the committee said to Fouquier: "See how lightly you accuse; do your duty better." Fouquier returned to the Conciergerie and set the prisoner free.

Projects of Dictatorship.

Public attention was directed to the new events when Robespierre made his report on the Supreme

Being. The religious hypocrisy of this discourse revealed to statesmen and observers the project of making some new revolution and of causing a crisis favourable to the transformation of power and Conventional government.

In fact, Saint-Just, Couthon, and Robespierre were secretly preparing projects of decrees and institutions which tended to exasperate men's minds and embitter their hearts; to multiply penalties and punishments by informal judgments and arbitrary acts. Thus the necessity of concentrating the power in a few governors would be felt, and the authors of the evil would have afterwards presented an amnesty or a relaxation of these violent measures.

I invite Robespierre to Dinner.

Some time before the 20th of Prairial, M. Loménie, ex-coadjutor of his uncle, the Archbishop of Sens, came to me. I had known him at Toulouse and had seen him at Paris with his uncle, the cardinal, at Madame Canisi's house in the Place du Corps Législatif, with whom I had often dined. M. Loménie asked me to get him to dine with Robespierre. "That is difficult," said I; "he is the most unsociable and distrustful deputy. However, I will try to oblige you; and I will also invite my uncle, M. Daune, a great friend of M. de Malesherbes." I risked the invitation, telling Robespierre that he would only meet deputies and my relatives and friends. He consented after much entreaty. He was morose and melancholy, as well as suspicious and distrustful. I met him on leaving the Assembly; we went to Meot's restaurant. We were six in number. The dinner was gay enough,

but Robespierre said nothing. However, after dinner he cheered up a little and asked me my uncle's name and that of the person next me. "My uncle," said I, "is very patriotic; he has fought in the army of Rochambeau for the independence of the United States." This gave my interlocutor some pleasure. "As to my neighbour," said I, "I knew him at Toulouse several years ago. He is a philosopher whose ideas are full of liberty and philanthropy; his name is Loménie." "He is a Brienne?" "Yes; the nephew of the cardinal who convoked the States-General and established by law the absolute liberty of the press." "That is good; but he is a noble." After a few seconds Robespierre took his hat and retired without speaking a word. M. Loménie perished in the revolution of Messidor.

Law of the 22nd of Prairial.

The Feast of the Supreme Being having been decided, Robespierre affected, as everyone knows, to be the leader of the Convention. This haughty affectation of being the first amongst deputies who were all equal displeased the people and the Convention. Several called him the revolutionary Pope. It was to give him the sceptre and censer, like Mahomet. This was the forecast of his fall in public opinion. Yet he himself did not expect it, for on the following day he proposed the frightful law of the 22nd of Prairial, which deprived revolutionary justice of the little form it had, diminished the number of jurors, established a real judicial tyranny—or, rather, a system of assassination with the sword of revolutionary laws. I demanded the adjournment in vain. All were frightened at the ascendency Robespierre had acquired

among the Jacobins, or were bowed down by the yoke of terror he had organised. The law passed through the silence of legislators rather than by their consent. The murmurs produced by this legislative violence led the Committees of Public Safety and of General Surety to complain that the new law had not been proposed, known, or deliberated previously by either of the two committees, although the object of this law touched the functions of the Committee of General Surety, and it was proposed by a member of the Committee of Public Safety. The deputies of the Convention were very much astonished at learning that we had no part in it, and that the bill was the fabrication of the triumvirate of Couthon, Saint-Just, and Robespierre. The horrible law was passed; its consequences were deplorable. It was by virtue of its clauses that those wholesale executions took place, and that monstrous huddling together of prisoners of all classes, astonished and frightened at being assembled in the same prisons and accused by the same laws.

I obtain two Acquittals from Fouquier-Tinville.

About this time I learned, on leaving my house to go to the committee at eleven o'clock a.m., that M. le Couteulx de Canteleu and his cousin, who had been detained for several months, were to be judged the same day with the coadjutor Loménie de Brienne and other accused persons of the high aristocracy.

I happened to meet Fouquier-Tinville, the public prosecutor, in front of the Tuileries. He had many papers under his arm; he asked me at what hour Robespierre came to the committee. "Never in the morning, and sometimes not until very late in the

evening," said I. "Then I'll go to his house." "What have you so urgent to tell him?" "Several accused persons are to be judged to-day about whom I wish to speak to him." This showed me that it was Robespierre and his triumvirate who secretly directed the accusations, the judgments, and those horrible accumulations of victims. I asked Fouquier-Tinville, "Who are those accused?" "Loménie and the two Couteulx, etc." "But what an inconceivable mixture!" said I indignantly. "How can you join in one prosecution people who have nothing in common, and who are so separated in opinions and society?" Fouquier was terrified at the tone I assumed, and withdrew. I afterwards learned from M. le Couteulx, of the Place Vendôme, that their judgment was adjourned, and that Fouquier, on going to the Conciergerie, said to the two Le Couteulx, "You have a good supporter in the Committee of Public Safety." "Who is it?" said they in amazement. "Barère has taken much interest in you and in M. de Loménie; you will not be included in this judgment." The 9th of Thermidor saw the two prisoners restored to liberty. One of them related this to me on coming to thank me at M. de Savalette's house.

The Committees of Public Safety and of General Surety attack the Law of the 22nd of Prairial.

In several evening sittings the two committees united to devise a means of revoking the law of the 22nd of Prairial. After several conferences during the month of Messidor, they called Robespierre and Saint-Just into their midst to force them to revoke this law, which was the result of a combination

unknown to all the members of the government. The meeting was very stormy: Vadier and Moïse Bayle were the members of the Committee of General Surety who attacked the law and its authors with the greatest force and indignation. As to the Committee of Public Safety, it declared that it had no part in it, and plainly disowned it. All were agreed to repeal it next day. After this decision Robespierre and Saint-Just declared that they would appeal to public opinion, that they saw that a party was formed to assure immunity to the enemies of the people, and thus to destroy the most ardent friends of liberty; but they could warn good citizens against the united manœuvres of the governing committees. They retired uttering threats against the members of the committees. Saint-Just called Carnot, amongst others, an aristocrat, and threatened to denounce him to the Assembly. This was like a declaration of war between the two committees and the triumvirate.

Seeing Carnot, the most indispensable worker in the committee, thus attacked on account of his courageous honesty and great military talent, I rose up against Saint-Just. Carnot seemed astonished at these threats of denunciation—terrible indeed from a man who two months before had denounced and destroyed Danton. On behalf of my attacked colleague, I said to this little dictator, "I do not fear you; I have always defended our country openly and without personal interest. I will answer you in the tribune if you lay the blame on Carnot. You know that I make reports that are favourably heard by the Assembly: I will make one of those reports in favour of Carnot and against you." From this moment Robespierre and his

friends acted with hostility against us, and especially against me. One day they even sent young Robespierre to me, whom they had recalled from the Basses Alpes. This lunatic entered the committee under pretext of giving an account of his mission to Nice; but instead of fulfilling this duty, he addressed me in a furious tone: "You have maltreated my brother. We missed you on the 31st of May, 1793: we shall not miss you on the 31st of May, 1794." He left still threatening us.

The Course of Robespierre.

Thus the course of Robespierre is summed up: first he took possession of the 31st of May, which had been organised by Danton, who feared this tyrannical violation, the work of his hands. Some days after, Robespierre treated Danton as a usurper, and usurped his place. He exterminated the representatives whose liberty and eloquence he feared; he no longer consulted those who remained, but his club. His powers increased in a frightful manner, when he seized the censer on the 20th of Prairial, and the last remnant of civil liberty on the 22nd. Immediately, he usurped the power of the people, ruling the Convention by fear, the government by denunciations at the club, the city by terror, the laws by violence, and the revolutionary tribunal by his secret sources of information. He usurped all power, terrified every will—for a time he absorbed the Republic in himself. But the Convention recollected on the 9th of Thermidor for four hours that it was invested with national power, and Robespierre was not.

The Triumvirs prepare another 31st of May.

Preliminary agitations filled the month of Messidor; the triumvirs redoubled their accusations and multiplied executions. They abstained, through hatred or policy, from coming to the meetings of the committee, and they only repaired to one of its offices on the third floor of the Tuileries to concert the means of transportation and exile of a section of the detained. Lists of them were prepared, but we only knew of their existence by the report of the general secretary, M. Pierre, to whom the clerks employed in Couthon and Saint-Just's private office had mentioned them.

We daily expected an attack from the triumvirs, and we learned that they wished to start a new movement by means of the so-called revolutionary armies of the interior and by free feasts given in the open street.

Consequent on this information the committee charged me with the report on the disbanding of these revolutionary armies, who had indulged in revolting acts of oppression and tyranny in the Soissonnais. I also made the report which abolished the pretended civic repasts, which led to public tumult and, above all, served to conceal the course and frightful progress of a new revolutionary movement. This is how Robespierre's agents termed the projected *coup d'état*.

Convocation of the Revolutionary Committees.

Thus the Feast of the Supreme Being, the tyrannical law of the 22nd of Prairial, the threats to the members of the two committees at the general conference, the organisation of an extraordinary office,

which, under the name of the Committee of Public Safety, was preparing lists of proscription and transportation at the direction of Saint-Just, Couthon, and Robespierre; the announcement of a new 31st of May, the exaggerated motions and speeches of the Jacobins during the months of Prairial and Messidor, the barbarous excesses of punishment, the threat of new arrests performed by all the revolutionary committees at once, all announced a great storm ready to burst forth. We doubted it no longer when we saw, at the end of this latter month, the solemn convocation of all the members of the forty-eight revolutionary committees of the sections of Paris at the town-hall.

This assembly of four or five hundred officers was as extraordinary in the form of its convocation as in the nature of the functions with which its members were vested. They could only form a committee in their own section and for their own duties. My colleagues charged me to write a report to annul this general convocation and to prohibit such reunions in future, which were contrary to the public peace and to the institution of the revolutionary committee.

Eighteen Deputies saved by the Committee of Public Safety.

The decree which I made on the subject did not stop the course of the intrigues which tended to destroy a certain number of deputies, to overthrow the two committees, and to adjourn the meetings of the Convention.

All tended towards this end at the Cordeliers Club as at the Jacobin. All seemed ready for a popular movement which was being managed by the agents of the Commune of Paris. The latter spent the very

sums given to it by the committee to furnish provisions for Paris in paying for new revolts and new proscriptions.

There was placed before the committee a list which the partisans of Robespierre circulated. It contained the names of eighteen deputies whom they wished to accuse for having gone beyond their mandate and exercised tyranny in the departments where they had been sent on missions. I remember some of the names — Tallien, Fréron, Barras, Alquier, Dubois-Crancé, Monestier du Puy-de-Dôme, Prieur, Cavaignac.

The Committee of Public Safety, which, since the dangerous and terrible effect produced by Danton's death, had sworn to oppose henceforth, unanimously and with all its might, every accusation directed against the members of the Convention— the committee, I say, renewed its oath, and agreed to protect the eighteen deputies from the attacks of Robespierre and Saint-Just. Thus we saved them. It is owing to that support that Tallien, on the morning of the 9th of Thermidor, was able to interrupt the reading of Saint-Just's report, when he came to denounce them, and that this same Tallien was able to propose an appeal to the Committee of Public Safety. We were, however, badly recompensed for this courageous resistance, for, amongst the deputies saved by us, we found our implacable persecutors and proscribers in the gloomy days of reaction.

Robespierre's Domination—Denunciation without Result.

When the plans of the Commune and its secret agents were made, the triumvirate believed they could

raise their head and march audaciously to their goal —the usurpation of power. Here a new order of things begins, horrible, execrable, as frightful as Oriental despotism, as bloody as the cruellest civil war.

On the 20th of Prairial Robespierre was made President of the Convention. He was created Pontiff.

On the 22nd of Prairial he published his kingly edicts and sanguinary laws. At the end of Prairial he put his tribunal of cannibals in motion, who during the month of Messidor covered the statue of Liberty with blood and sullied it with crimes.

At the end of Messidor he denounced the members of the government to the Jacobins. He organised the communal rebellion against the authority of the people.

On the 8th of Thermidor he put his hand on supreme rule. For a moment there was no longer a republic.

On the 9th he is borne to the scaffold with all the factionaries, who since the 31st of May oppressed, outraged, dishonoured national representation and the first nation in the world.

A hundred times during this too long space of six weeks I had carried from the committee into my solitary apartment a disgust for existence, that tedium of life which springs less from the evils we experience than from impotence to suppress the private and public evils we witness.

How, with any heart, could one wish to preserve life in the midst of so many cowardly crimes, so much unpunished cruelty, so many usurpers of patriotic reputation? No, I would never have consented to keep silence, or not to give up my post, if I had not seen in some men of the committee and of the

Convention the same sentiment of indignation and horror against this unsupportable tyranny of a man reigning by enthusiasm in a club, reigning by this club in the Convention, reigning by the Convention, and above all by terror, over the immense population of Paris!

I resolved to die, but to die with glory, in placing myself among those who wished to unmask or dethrone Robespierre. Having thus made up my mind, I denounced this tyrant in a report made to the tribune on the 2nd of Thermidor. But then I was alone, entirely alone. Either they did not understand me or, indeed, at that time of calamity and terror, no person in this senate dared to take up the arms I had thrown into the arena.

Robespierre demands of the Committees the Establishment of four Revolutionary Tribunals — Saint-Just proposes a Dictatorship.

In the first days of Messidor, Saint-Just and Robespierre demanded an extraordinary assembly for essential proposals which required the union of the Committees of Public Safety and General Surety. The meeting commenced at ten o'clock in the morning. Robespierre first proposed the establishment of four revolutionary tribunals. This proposal made all indignant, but they listened to the orator; only the chief reasons of opposition to these terrible measures were adduced. However, to ascertain his thoughts and ulterior projects, he was asked if the deliberations were to be restricted to this plan of penal establishment.

Forced back to their entrenchments, Lebas and Saint-Just spoke successively to explain the necessity of forcibly suppressing the enemies of the people, who were at the point of triumphing and overthrowing the

work of freedom. Saint-Just spoke second, and his expressions were less vague. "Evil is at its height," said he; "you are in the completest anarchy in power and will. The Convention inundates France with unexecuted and often unexecutable laws. The representatives with the armies dispose of our money and military destiny as they like. The representatives on missions usurp all power, make laws, collect gold for which they substitute assignats. How can such political and legislative disorder be regulated? For my part, I declare by my honour and conscience, I see but one means of safety, which is the concentration of power, the unity of the government's measures, energy brought to bear on political institutions, of which the ancients made such good use." Impatience was seizing all the members of the two committees. "Explain yourself: what do you mean?" was shouted on all sides. Saint-Just replied with the coldness characteristic of his machiavellian spirit and concentrated ambition, "Very well, I am explaining. We want a dictatorial power different to that of the two committees; we want a man of sufficient talent, power, patriotism, and energy to accept the use of the public power; we want especially a man endowed with such a habit of revolution in his principles, actions, and agents that he may be able to answer for the public security and the maintenance of liberty; finally, we want a man favoured by public opinion, and enjoying the confidence of the people, and a virtuous, inflexible, and incorruptible citizen. That man I declare to be Robespierre; he alone can save the State. I ask that he be invested with the dictatorship, and that the two committees should make this proposal to the Convention tomorrow."

Robespierre's party in this assembly of the two committees was composed of Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, and a man famous in the arts, whom respect for his great talents forbids me to name. The nature of his talent, which he used in other paths than politics, ought to absolve him from this opinion.

We found the dictators somewhat premature, and we forcibly and even derisively opposed this institution, unsuited to our manners, habits, and principles, and totally subversive of the system adopted by the national representation.

After a short and animated discussion, the dictators, ashamed and vexed, saw themselves unanimously refused and their proposal of dictatorship rejected by an order of the day, which was a declaration of war to the death.

Robespierre's Speech to the Convention on the 8th of Thermidor.

Three days after, on the 8th of Thermidor,[1] the dictators erected their batteries in the Convention, in a very honeyed speech of Robespierre; to destroy him more effectually several members demanded that it be printed and sent into the departments. The projected dictatorship was seen in a number of indirect and artificial accusations against the committee, and even against the members of the Convention. I thought it my duty to support the demand of printing to neutralise the effect it had produced in the tribune, and to enlighten Paris and the departments on this powerful intrigue, which threatened to invade and usurp everything.

[1] It is evident that Barère has made a mistake in his dates in saying a little while back that this general meeting of the two committees took place in the first days of Messidor—he meant to say Thermidor, since here he states that three days after Robespierre makes his speech of the 8th of Thermidor.

The Jacobin Club.

On the evening of the same day the Jacobin Club was better attended than usual; the most violent motions were carried against the Convention and, above all, against the members of the Committee of Public Safety till midnight. The vehemence of the debates, the fanaticism of opinions, and the multiplicity of denunciations were carried to such a pitch that Collot and Billaud, who had the indiscreet curiosity to go and assist at this stormy meeting, nearly became its victims. They returned at midnight to the committee, where they related all they had heard. They told us that the fury of the club was so great that the members spoke of coming at night and getting rid of the members of the two committees.

Night of the 8th to the 9th of Thermidor—Offer of the Notary, M. Lecointre.

We were deliberating very quietly on the measures of public safety to be taken on the following day and on the proclamations and decrees to be proposed at the Convention. I was charged with this work, and I did it with such speed that towards three o'clock in the morning I submitted to the committee the scheme to break all the levers of the armed forces of the Commune, and of the forty-eight sections of Paris, in the hands of the triumvirs. I afterwards read to them a proclamation to the inhabitants of Paris, as well as the course of measures to be taken to denounce the triumvirs and the agents of the dictatorial project, the object of the wishes of the Jacobins.

Towards three o'clock in the morning Cambon came to the committee with an officer from the Rue Meslay,

commanding this section, which seemed devoted to the Convention. This officer was a notary, M. Lecointre. He knew the murderous projects he had heard at the Jacobin Club. He told us that on that night these lunatics were to enter the committee on all sides, as it was protected by no force. He offered us the battalion of his section to watch over our safety and to defend us against the Jacobins. These wretches chiefly desired to descend upon the Committee of Public Safety.

Cambon insisted on our accepting his offer. We refused, saying that we had nothing to fear from those who called themselves the friends of liberty; and that we had never feared assassins, as the committee contained six hundred members ready to replace us in the committees of the government; a representative body never dies. The notary, a major, was thanked for his zeal and devotion. He deserved it indeed. He also witnessed our deliberation and our courage.

The 9th of Thermidor—Robespierre's Speech.

At last the sun of the 9th of Thermidor lighted all those plots which had been devised in the darkness of mobbish tyranny and dictatorial ambition.

Many urgent affairs regarding the armies that were advancing triumphantly into Belgium, driving out the allies and fighting on all the frontiers, occupied the Committee of Public Safety in the morning of this day. The Convention, which had been alarmed by the vociferations and threats of the Jacobins, commenced its meeting at ten o'clock. Saint-Just did not appear at the committee, although he had announced that he would submit a report; but the duplicity of his character and the astute

nature of Robespierre had decided him to act otherwise. As soon as the minutes of the evening before were read, Saint-Just came stealthily to the tribune and read a speech to the Convention, in which he had the cowardice to attack the members of the committee in their absence, without any of the members being forewarned of the denunciation to reply to it. Tallien interrupted the speech for a moment, the only service he did that day, for which he wished to assign to himself all the honours.

Robespierre, more curled and powdered than usual, is in his place near the tribune. He watches the effect the discourse is to produce. When Saint-Just denounces the opinions and works of the committee, the astonishment and indignation caused by so much cowardice and injustice produce murmurs in the Assembly. Tallien—who knows perfectly that he is one of the eighteen proscribed deputies, whose accusation is to be discussed on that day after the attack directed against the committee, which defended the lives of these eighteen deputies — with equal ingenuity and courage, profits by the first moment of public disapprobation to complain that Saint-Just is attacking the members of the committee in their absence, and demands that the speech be suspended till they be warned to come into the Assembly at once.

That was the only thing Tallien did on the 9th of Thermidor. This simple fact was then too well known to the public to attribute to him the great influence which the agents of Coblenz and his contra-revolutionary friends have sought to give him since, with the intention of rendering him powerful in the opinions

and passions of the reactionary party which domineered until the 13th of Vendémiaire.

The Committee goes to the Convention.

After the usher of the Convention had informed us, we all went to the meeting. I was by no means the last. I was asked to combat these ambitious dictators. On entering the hall I obtain permission to speak on measures of general safety. Saint-Just wishes to submit his discourse to the committee, but several deputies demanded the continuation of the reading, and afterwards that it be signed by its author, and deposited on the table to be a part of the minutes.

After these preliminaries I mount the tribune. I was going to present the decree on the armed force of the sections when Robespierre ran and stood at my side, politely asking to speak to what was called the centre of the Assembly. He counted on this majority, which has always been a great force in number and inertia. This time the immobility of this quarter showed me that they were observant, awaiting the manifestation of the Assembly and of the galleries which had been crowded from five o'clock that morning.

There were murmurs and signs of approbation, but their cause was unknown. They seemed to wish for order, and to depend on some object or individual. These great assemblies must be seen when agitated by unusual events or by strong passions to get an idea of the fluctuation of opinions and versatility of wishes. At last, in this tumultuous uncertainty, several cried out, "Down with the tyrant! Hear Barère!" These cries, instead of hushing the tumult,

increased it. At last I got a hearing. The *Moniteur* of the 10th of Thermidor reported these exclamations, which determined the state of the Convention at this decisive hour. They show that the accusation of tyranny struck the head of Robespierre, and that I got a hearing by a unanimous and contrary sentiment. My enemies cannot reply to this single fact nor refute a single page of the *Moniteur*.

Robespierre's Countenance—Movement of the Assembly.

Robespierre, hat in hand, again addresses the Assembly from the bar in front of the tribune, and begs to be heard before the reporter of the committee begins to speak. The cries, "Down with the tyrant! Let Barère speak!" recommence with greater force, and the reporter of the committee begins to speak. I show the state to which division and private ambition have brought the Convention; I ask, before all, that it put strength in our hands, and keep in their place the forty-eight sections of Paris, whose first duty is to defend national representation. Placed over it, Robespierre's devoted commander, Henriot, ought to be without power. The mayor of Paris is declared responsible for public order, and the ambitious see their instruments of seduction and trouble broken before their eyes.

Whilst I was speaking, my brother, who was behind the president's chair, observed Robespierre's movements. He was always agitated in the tribune. My brother and his neighbours feared that he would attempt to take my life, so violent was his fit of anger and convulsion. Such an apprehension became a brother, but it should not be feared from

Robespierre. This man was barbarous with the sword of the law or the iron of the revolution, but not man to man.

I continued my reports, and Robespierre stayed in the tribune. He still hoped to get a hearing. A part of the Assembly was still doubtful. I was always reheard. Then I presented this proclamation, which called the forty-eight armed sections to the national representation, and neutralised to a certain hour of this terrible day the intrigues and tricks of the Jacobins and the fanatical partisans of Robespierre. In this proclamation I portrayed the ambition of Robespierre, so that it was recognised by all, and at his side I said these useful truths.

Scarcely was the decree of proclamation voted, when a crowd demanded Robespierre's impeachment, and his descent to the bar for self-defence; others wanted his arrest. These two motions suddenly changed the indifference of the centre into a movement conformable to that of the upper benches of the Mountain. Then I saw Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just beaten. Public opinion abandoned them. They were arrested and impeached. The Assembly, astonished or perhaps frightened at its own courage and decrees, separated at five o'clock, adjourning till nine in the evening.

Whilst the Meeting is suspended, the arrested Deputies collect in the Commune—Henriot.

Cardinal de Retz said, in his memoirs, that all the projects and plans of the fault-finders failed because the French do not know how to change their habits. This well expresses that part of the national

character which puts pleasure, feasts, and customs before everything, however urgent may be public or private affairs, as well as political interest.

Could the absence of the Convention from its place of meeting fail to be fatal at a moment when a permanent sitting was so necessary? Robespierre and Saint-Just, arrested in the Hall of General Surety, are brought from there by Henriot at the head of a troop of armed men and gunners, who are to lead the prisoners to the *mairie*. There Robespierre persuades them that he will be better at the Commune, and they transfer him thither. The other deputies, Saint-Just, Couthon, and Lebas, go there immediately and consider their measures to attack the Convention before it could reassemble.

Henriot appears on the Place du Carrousel about eight o'clock; he tries to enter the hall of meeting, to close it, and make himself master of Paris by means of the armed sections. He is on horseback, with several aides-de-camp and other soldiers of his staff.

Letters of an English Spy to Robespierre.

Whilst these things occurred on the Place du Carrousel, the committee took note of a letter addressed from Geneva to Robespierre, and written on the 26th of the preceding Messidor by an Englishman, Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, who had frequently visited him, and whom the committee had banished from Paris.

This letter made a profound impression on my colleagues, and they resolved that I should make a report on it and read it to the Convention to convince them of the dangers they had run, and

of the communications between the future dictator and our foreign enemies. I annex a copy of the letter, that Robespierre's fanatical and too credulous followers may recognise the nature of his political relations with the foreigner, as well as the artful projects of the English government; for Benjamin Vaughan, styling himself a member of the opposition in the House of Commons, thus disguised his *rôle* of one of Pitt's political spies. The English minister only asked for the intervention of a popular man, capable of strong measures, in order to overthrow the two committees and adjourn the National Convention indefinitely. Annex the proposals of Mr. Vaughan to the proposal to give Robespierre the dictatorship as a means of saving France and liberty, that was made at the reunion of the two committees, in the month of Messidor. By comparing these facts the partisans of Robespierre will judge if they would have supported a dictatorship.

Copy of B. Vaughan's Letter to Robespierre.

"CITIZEN,—The truly great man does not want to be called great: he knows it and recognises it when he is treated as great. I am going to tell you some great things in a simple manner.

"When water exceeds a certain depth, one cannot see the bottom; and when the show of happiness passes certain limits, happiness does not increase in the same proportion. After a certain point all resides in the soul and not in things. France has territory enough for external defence, and territory enough to profit by the competition of all within; its glory does not depend on its extent, for Sparta and Geneva are

not famous for their size or population. The soul, wisdom, honesty, beneficence, these are the principles of glory; Plato, Newton, Rousseau are as well known to us at the age of twenty-one as Alexander and Cæsar, or better, who owe their renown more to great traits of character than to their conquests.

"Why, then, should not France propose to the seven provinces of Holland, to the ten provinces of Austria, to Liège, to the ecclesiastical electorates on the Rhine, and to all countries between the Rhine and France, to profit by the occasion? France will assist them to become a federal government, under a congress, with power to amalgamate or not with one another for their particular governments, provided that every male of a certain age can vote for the choice of government, both private and federal; that is without rejecting the *sans-culottes* on the one side, or the nobles on the other, all being men. It must be begun in this country. The universality of votes is a good principle; the exclusion of the privileged will only cause tumults as formerly. A government three-fourths free will become completely free, as France has shown. Such a federation would put on your side eight or nine million men, who would overcome the allies without making France pay the expense. Thereby France will obtain glory, economy, peace at once, and a rampart for the future; it will give the example for the emancipation of Germany, that is, of the world. To perceive the good of this project we must consider the little evil it involves and compare it with other projects.

"If I find that I do not displease you, I will take, from time to time, the liberty of writing you through

the channel of your ministers. I may be deceived about the means and objects, but I cannot be deceived in concluding that noble and strong measures briefly proposed will not displease you, although you should have excelled them by better.

"I can give abundant proofs that I can preserve secrecy, for I am forty-four years old, almost unknown, although always engaged in great events with great men.

"Greeting and brotherhood,

(Signed) "BENJ. VAUGHAN.[1]

"Geneva, 26th Messidor, year II."

Necessary Note.

To understand the value of this letter, previous facts must be disclosed. At the beginning of Messidor, the Committee of Public Safety was informed of the arrival in Paris of an Englishman, a member of the opposition in the House of Commons, who often went to Robespierre's house. The committee charged the Minister of Foreign Affairs to watch this Englishman. It was reported that this secret envoy only went to Robespierre, and they thought he was chosen by Pitt from the opposition to deceive the French police and to get more credit from Robespierre. The Committee of Public Safety ordered Benjamin Vaughan to leave French soil within twenty-four hours.

Instead of returning to England, he asked for a

[1] Mr. B. Vaughan's original letter was opened and read to the Committee of Public Safety, who attested the fact by the signatures of two of its members, thus: "Addressed to Robespierre and opened in the Committee on the 9th of Thermidor.—Signed, B. BARÈRE, J. BILLAUD."

passport for Geneva, where he retired, and thence wrote to Robespierre, on the 26th of Messidor, year II. (1794), the above letter. On the evening of the 9th of Thermidor the post brought it to the Committee of Public Safety. This is how it must be interpreted from these facts:

1. Mr. Vaughan was to sound Robespierre as to receiving support from the English government.

2. He proposes the ancient boundaries of France should be retained, the abandonment of Holland, Belgium, and of the limit of the Rhine; this would give the support of eight or nine million men to Robespierre's ambition.

3. He flatters Robespierre with the honour of giving Germany the example of emancipation, and offers him the means of making it a rampart.

4. He proposes correspondence from Geneva with Robespierre through the channel of the ministers of France, whom he doubtless supposed devoted to his person, and announces that he will submit to him noble and *strong* views briefly stated.

5. He declares that he can preserve secrecy and has been mixed in great events with what he calls great men. Here is a spy of high degree who proposes the dismemberment of France, the federation of Germany, the abandonment of Belgium and of the limit of the Rhine.

Let anyone now say that Robespierre had not connections with foreigners, with the English government, and did not aspire to dictatorship, which Saint-Just had demanded in his presence in both committees in Messidor in the year II. Mr. Vaughan, an Englishman and member of the opposition, did not once mention

the word "liberty" in this long letter, and yet he wrote to its popular defender.

The Two Camps—Result.

As soon as Henriot gave way, the alarm was given in the enemy's camp, in the Commune. Robespierre called up the forty-eight companies of gunners with their guns. These companies were on the Place de Grève from nine o'clock p.m. awaiting the order to put themselves in motion. On the other side the Convention assembled precisely at the same hour. The committee had just learned that different members had been put outside the law in the Commune of Paris by a proclamation signed by Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, and Robespierre. I was told to propose a decree to put in their turn outside the law the members of the Commune of Paris and the four deputies who united with it against the national representation.

This terrible decree was proclaimed with torches in Paris towards midnight, from the Tuileries to the Quai de l'Ecole, and, singularly, the proclamation of Robespierre against the Assembly was issued at the same time in the other quarters of Paris beyond the Place de Grève. It was like the time of the League and the Fronde.

In the meantime we learned that the companies of the forty-eight sections, eager to act, and having received no order, awaited only a decree or proclamation from the Convention to unite with it. The person who informed us of this seemed a good patriot. I made a manuscript proclamation calling the gunners who were faithful to their fatherland to side with the representatives. Scarcely was it read to the gunners

than they left the Place de Grève and came to the Carrousel. This was the decisive movement of this day, very doubtful till that moment (midnight). The committee sent several representatives after midnight to the head of the armed sections, who surrendered at the appeal of the Convention. When the four deputies put outside the law learnt the desertion of the sectional battalions, they fled. Robespierre alone gave himself, or received, a pistol bullet in the mouth, by which he lost much blood, and was delivered defenceless to the police in the hall of the Commune. He was carried in this hideous state into one of the large waiting-rooms of the Committee of Public Safety, where he remained, it was said, in a dying state all night and part of the next day. Saint-Just, Lebas, and Couthon were taken in flight. This sad day was ended by the imprisonment of the majority of the members of the Commune of Paris.

Portrait of Robespierre, Saint-Just, Couthon, and Lebas.

I hasten to finish this sorrowful picture of civil dissensions, leaving history to engrave the characteristic features of Robespierre, whose virtues and vices were in the same proportion. On the one side, honesty, love of liberty, firmness of principles, love of poverty, devotion to the popular cause; on the other side, a dangerous moroseness, a bilious rage against his enemies, an atrocious jealousy of talents that eclipsed his, an insupportable mania to domineer, a limitless distrust, a dangerous mobbism, and a fanaticism of principles that made him prefer the establishment of a law to the existence of a population. Such he appeared to me at the Assembly and Convention.

Saint-Just was younger and more dissembling, cool in dispute, absolute, imperious, and trenchant in discussion. His mind was fire, his heart was ice. He had something of the witty sententiousness of Montesquieu, and sometimes the concise obscurity of Tacitus. He spoke much against tyrants, and showed himself capable of exercising tyranny. He aimed at being original, yet he much resembled Seneca.

Couthon was paralytic. His head was good, but his opinions extravagant. He had the language of an honest man, and the tone of a fanatic. He loved liberty, but was mad on the line he had taken.

Lebas was a disciple of Saint-Just, and fanaticised by him. He perished for this reason only; he was cold, phlegmatic, and had never uttered an opinion that could compromise him.

Result of the 9th of Thermidor.

The 9th of Thermidor broke the revolutionary power. From that time it belonged to the first comer. The most daring party was that previously most depressed—the royalist Girondins. The centre, always ready to join the strongest side, joined the Girondins. The reactionary and vindictive deputies still counted on their side the representatives on missions who had abused their powers and wasted money in the departments. The latter believed their only hope of safety lay in leaguing themselves with the Girondins, whom they had formerly oppressed. By this coalition they even participated in the power in the completely renewed committees, and took possession of their own accusing correspondence. Of this number were Barras, Fréron, Tallien, Merlin de Thionville, André Dumont,

Monestier of the Puy de Dôme; the corrupt followers of Danton, and the fanatics of Robespierre; Legendre, Courtois, and the familiar figures of the centre.

They formed but a contra-revolutionary coalition with which the secret agents of Louis XVIII. and the emigrants who had returned by permission of the Committee of Public Safety combined. The persecution of the patriots and Republicans under the name of Terrorists was so general, so atrocious, that royalty thought it was done on its behalf. Consequently it worked upon the sections of Paris whose tendency was always monarchical, and who hoped to get their own way.

The execrable excesses of the Thermidoriens at Marseilles, Tarascon, Avignon, Nimes, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes, Lyons, and in the principal departments, inspired the Parisian royalists with such excessive rashness that they ruined themselves on the 13th of Vendémiaire through being too eager to fight. Then finished the contra-revolutionary reign of the Thermidoriens. The year III. and its constitution seemed to stop their march, restrict their excesses, and commence a veritable constitutional era.

But the majority of the cowardly and vindictive men of Thermidor had only changed camps. From the extinguished National Convention they passed to the rising Executive Directory. The same men and same opinions should produce like results. Absolutism and *coups d'état* continued; the monarchical tendencies sanctioned by the establishment of the two councils and of the directorial power were so reinforced that had they been directed by strong and clever men, public affairs would have taken a course contrary to the

Revolution, and would have been made in the name of liberty.

But incapable men, the instruments of royal and aristocratic despotism, can never stop the progress of human enterprise, or shackle the progress of the ideas of the age towards popular enfranchisement. From the executive Directory to victorious Napoleon, and to the restoration of the Bourbons by a European army, no contra-revolution has been able to succeed, either by military glory or by divine right.

My Efforts to make them adopt Gentle Measures.

On the 10th and 11th of Thermidor I made reports which were to calm revolutionary measures — that all these misfortunes and faults of this time of terror and civil war should be laid in Robespierre's tomb. But there were some very rebellious spirits in the Assembly, who, having been for a long time restrained, asked only for vengeance and reaction. Besides, the favourite maxim of these gentlemen was then, as it is to-day, " Clear out of that, and let me take your place." Tallien, Barras, Boissy-d'Anglas, Treilhard, and André Dumont wished to be in their turn members of the Committee of Public Safety. Cambacérès, Clauzel, Pémartin, and Isabeau wished to taste the sweets of government too. That was dearer to them than the defence of the Republic; none of these gentlemen had sustained it in the time of danger, when liberty and its successes were extremely problematic.

In one of my reports I said in plain terms that " the name of Republic should be consoling and assuring to the citizens; this name should resound

in every prison, where there should be no longer any trace of the political opinions that divided us."

I have always professed the great principles and liberal axioms written by Jeremy Bentham in his excellent work on legislation. "In a matter of revolution and civil war there is no opinion truly guilty and amenable to the tribunals, since they repose equally on good faith, and every human opinion may be defended."

Certainly the Convention was capable of proclaiming great principles of public liberty and assuring the rights of the nation; but I did not believe it capable of understanding and professing the principles of this absolute toleration recommended by Bentham, for all the terrible events which signalised the duration of this assembly came from resistance and intolerance of opinion.

The General Liberation of the Prisoners is adjourned.

I entered the committee to introduce measures of gentleness and reconciliation, but at the end of a week several members of the committee changed their opinion that the prisons should be opened, the constitution continued, and the ordinary laws resumed. Some feared reaction from this general and sudden liberation of the prisoners, and said that the spirit of resentment could not be checked if all these were restored to society, bearing the remembrance of their sufferings and their thoughts of vengeance. These considerations delayed for a fortnight the report which I was to make on giving liberty to the imprisoned in a general measure.

The Committee of General Surety had many new

members, who preferred to give liberty gradually, and to obtain praise for what was but an act of justice. Everybody knows that, at this time of reaction, liberty was sold, that illustrious families and orphans were taxed by the men of whom I speak. Not to carry infamy to their tombs, I refrain from naming them, although they contributed largely to my proscription:

"The God I serve is the God that pardons."

I perceived at once that André Dumont and Tallien, amongst others, did not wish me to reap the advantage and happiness of making a report tending to efface the revolutionary *régime*. As if the hand that gave a wound could not heal it! But such is the human heart. My colleagues whom I saved were my cruellest enemies.

PART II

From the 9th of Thermidor (1794) to the 18th of Brumaire (1799).

Pretexts are sought for renewing the Members of the Committee of Public Safety.

In September, 1794, I began to see the persecutions and accusations that the envy of my colleagues, anxious to come into power, would prepare for me. Every kind of attack was used, whether in the newspapers or with the members of the Convention, to have a pretext to renew the members of the Committee of Public Safety. They clung very much to a report on the reorganisation of a terrifying tribunal, which it would have been better to destroy along with the remembrance of its judgments, or rather of its proscriptions; but I expressed the wish of the committee. When I saw the result in the debates of the Convention at an evening meeting presided over by Tallien, I no longer doubted of the snare laid for me, to ruin me with the public, and to obtain more surely a partial renewal of the members of the Committee of Public Safety.

From September to October, 1794.—The Members of the Committee of General Surety arrogate to themselves the Exclusive Right of liberating the imprisoned.

Those who wished to seize the power of the committee commenced by sending their creatures to prepare

the way for the really ambitious. At first wise, moderate, patriotic, honourable deputies were appointed; of this number were Eschasseriaux the elder, deputy for the Charente Inférieure, a man full of learning, patriotism, energy, and wisdom. If there had only been in the renewed committee deputies of this kind, reaction would not have dishonoured and corrupted the second period of the National Convention. This new member had joined me in preparing the report on the opening of the prisons and the cessation of revolutionary measures. We worked together on the basis and means of executing this project, which justice and public quiet demanded. The report was finished, when the members of the Committee of General Surety, with André Dumont and Clauzel at their head, came and asked to concert with the Committee of Public Safety upon the measures to be taken to free the imprisoned without injuring the action of the government or disturbing the Republic with new passions. The purpose was praiseworthy, but, with the deputies I have named, it was but a pretext to obstruct the work already accomplished by the Committee of Public Safety on this urgent matter, which was essentially the work of the Committee of Government.

Firstly, the members of the Committee of General Surety wished to deprive me of the honour of making a report which partly repaired the evils of the Revolution;

Secondly, to prevent Eschasseriaux, whom they intended to make reporter in my place, from making a proposal rendering the Committee of General Surety almost useless;

Finally, to leave this last committee the exclusive

and lucrative right of granting all the mandates of liberty as a favour, whilst the Committee of Public Safety considered them as a right. The Committee of General Surety proposed to only gradually send off these mandates which, according to the Committee of Public Safety, ought to be given at once and in the form of a general amnesty.

Increasing Influence of some Ambitious Men.

Whilst some lovers of power pushed me by their strange proceedings from my place in order to seize it themselves, I annoyed them again by several reports that I read to the Convention on the important advantages which our brave army of the Pyrénées-Orientales had just gained by penetrating into Biscay and Navarre. I also made several reports on the means of capturing the four northern towns occupied by the allies. At last I announced, some days after, the capture of these four towns. One other place still remained in the power of the Austrians. Whilst, on the motion of several members, the National Convention unanimously decreed that the members of the Committee of Public Safety had deserved the gratitude of their country and performed their functions to the great satisfaction of the Convention and the Republic, a telegraphic despatch arrived which seemed to sanction this decree by a last victory. The despatch announced that the last place occupied by the enemy had surrendered, and that French territory was totally free from foreign hordes.

From these different views, or rather speculations, in the two committees an extraordinary power arose in the hands of five or six influential members of the

Committee of General Surety. These men took possession of the opinion, movement, and spirit of revenge that animated the liberated prisoners. They formed so numerous and passionate a body that they alone in their secret councils directed the violent course of a reaction supported by public authority. The selfish and superficial minds, which abound in France, paid no attention to the influence this patronage could give, nor to the real force of this dreadful party, which thought only of riot, vengeance, and exile.

I leave the Committee with Three other Members.

The old members of the committee had remained and worked with those whom the Assembly had newly appointed. It was very difficult for two forces so contrary as the spirit of freedom and the spirit of slavery—the desire to repair past evils and the desire of vengeance—to associate and permit the two parties to unite their votes, and so work together. It was decided that four out of the eight old members should leave the committee. Collot, Billaud, and Lindet retired in disgust. A fourth was wanted.

At this time I enjoyed the friendship of the majority of my colleagues, who were daily witnesses of my legislative, political, and military work in the tribune, as well as of my good faith and devotion to the interests of France. When this elimination was decided on, I consulted several of my colleagues whose good sense and opinion I esteemed. Eschasseriaux the elder told me that my withdrawal from the committee would calm the passions of some individuals, and especially their envy. Granet of Marseilles spoke to me more frankly; he said, "Resign; that ends all.

Thus you will be quiet; these people will never forgive your celebrity and long success at the tribune. Better come down and give them your place." "We shall see." They wished me to draw lots with Prieur of the Côte d'Or, Saint-André, and Carnot. I refused; I told my colleagues that I had too long monopolised the attention of the Assembly and occupied the tribune, that I would ostracise myself without awaiting the uncertain result of lottery. I told the Committee of Public Safety that it required the talents of Carnot, the activity of Prieur, the intelligence of Saint-André; thus I considered my lot was cast, and I resigned.

The Republic before its Accusers.

Scarcely had this change taken place when Fréron, working his libels through one Dussault, demanded of the Convention the unlimited liberty of the press. That is without doubt the first foundation of civil and political freedom; but in Fréron's sense, and in such vile hands, this liberty was intended to be, and actually was, but a privilege granted to calumniators —a brief of impunity for moral assassins whom it was to put in motion.

[Then commenced the attacks against the republican government; the Frérons and Talliens, subsidised from Coblenz and London, found imitators for a long time. Accused at first by the reactionists of 1795, who agitated for the emigrant princes, the Republic was afterwards successively accused by the supporters of the consulate of 1800, who inherited the military forces and the administrative and financial work of the democracy; by the imperialists, who in their vanity as soldiers and their thirst for gifts and

riches wished for none of those troublesome institutions which demanded disinterestedness and civic virtue; by the restorationists, who by their hypocritical charter wished only to establish the *ancien régime*, and who brought back all the lumber of the old monarchy of Versailles in coaches; by the kings and ministers of the Holy Alliance, because they trembled in 1814 at the thought of the Republic, and because this word still prevents them in 1832 from sleeping soundly on their feudal and absolute thrones; finally, by the powers and ministers of the royalty of the 7th of August, elective as it is, because in the heroic and free days of July the word republic was pronounced; because royalty, which was adroitly substituted for it, tried to live under republican institutions.

The systematic calumniators of the National Convention wished only to grant that this assembly of political giants possessed enthusiasm and a system of terror, without considering their intelligence and patriotic courage.

Cease then to accuse the Republic, which saved our country and freedom, which drove absolute kings from its territory, which gave Europe a strong social constitution, and the future a great example.

Cease then to accuse the Republic: it could only show you its rigour, its terrible suspicions, its extreme severity; it could not make you enjoy its benefits and your rights in the midst of combats against the armed hordes of European despotism and in the very midst of conspiracies.

Cease to accuse the Republic: in 1793 and 1794 it did not despair of the fatherland, in spite of the obstacles that opposed it—the ancient servility, the

fanaticism of the West and South, and the concentrated selfishness of the capital.

Cease to accuse the Republic, which flung off its constitutional and legal character, to frankly establish an inexorable dictatorship, by proclaiming the compulsory suspension of the constitution, and by organising a revolutionary government. It was condemned, in order to live, to make the law a pitiless sword and civil liberty a holocaust.

Cease to accuse the Republic! It did not look after itself, but the citizens. You owe to it the little civic virtue that remains, and much of that national energy which will always protect France against the invader.

Cease to accuse the Republic! you inhabitants of the frontiers. It has repelled the enemy. It has extended the shield of public defence wherever the enemy wished to penetrate. It made a girdle of iron for France, and a fortress of public spirit for liberty. It has called to its aid public opinion and victory.

Cease to accuse the Republic! it has gloriously answered its armed invaders, the liberty-slaying powers, its defamers, the fanatics of royalty. How could it spread the benefits of liberty in this horrible clash of civil dissension and foreign war? The question was, "To be or not to be?" France owes to it its existence. What would be the good of glory, emancipation, and fundamental laws, if France were invaded, enslaved, mutilated, effaced from the political map of Europe, according to the plan of division written and signed at Pilnitz, Pavia, and London?]

Fréron and Lecointre denounce the Old Members of the Committee of Public Safety.

The decree on the unlimited freedom of the press was scarcely passed when there appeared (on the very next day) *Le Citoyen Français*, by Tallien, and *L'Orateur du Peuple*, by Fréron. These were the two torches of reaction. The evils produced by those two journals are well known, as well as the injury done to public freedom and private security by their calumnies.

Fréron did not confine himself to this. He composed a voluminous pamphlet, entitled, "Denunciation of the Old Members of the Committee of Public Safety." This libel, full of dishonesty and insults, produced a great effect on the public, who are always eager for novelty, and a passionate lover of slander and anecdotes malignantly told. The vindictive spirit of the liberated prisoners favoured the circulation of this calumnious writing, which, in defiance of the decree *that we had deserved well of the fatherland* that had been passed by the Convention in our favour some days before, was going to question our public conduct.

The scandal of this denunciation was still further increased by the knowledge everyone possessed of the intrigues carried on by a deputy, naturally heated in denouncing what were presented to him as abuses. This deputy was Lecointre of Versailles.

Perhaps the following will scarcely be believed. In the spring of the year IX., being at the reception of the Minister of Secret Police, Fouché, I met, amongst the persons waiting to be admitted, this same Lecointre. I was astonished at seeing him there, and went to meet him as he, at the same time, approached me. I can never hate my enemies. It is too hard and

wicked to employ one's life and occupy one's mind thus. "You here, Barère! I am pleased to see you. It was not I who worked against you; it was your personal enemies, and I am not amongst their number. I have lent my name to all; but I found out my mistake and injustice too late, especially towards you. I was very sorry, and you will find me very changed." "No matter. I am satisfied with what you have just said, and the justice you do me. Better late than never. I have forgotten all. It is a long time ago, and in hearing you I think it has never existed." This brave man was touched. He clasped my hand. He died some time after at Versailles.

I believe Lecointre was an honest man, in spite of his denouncing habits, and that others excited his civic fanaticism against the members of the committee by saying that his very courageous attack would immortalise him. Wishing to gain immortality, and being instructed by Fréron, he declared himself before the Convention as the denouncer of the old members of the committee. He distributed ten or twelve thousand copies of this scandalous monument of public ingratitude which had been written by the hands of the most contemptible slanderers.

The Convention, on receiving this pretended denunciation of Lecointre, only exhibited indignation. The justice which was due to us for our immense works during the most disastrous times, and the most terrible storms of the Revolution, was proclaimed a second time. A new decree declared in the face of the denunciators and paid calumniators that the old members of the Committee of Public Safety *had deserved well of their native land.*

Bassal, Lecointre's colleague in the representation of the Seine-et-Oise, who saw him daily, told me that he had blamed Lecointre's infamous action, that he wished to get him to disown this pamphlet by declaring that Fréron got him to put his name to it and present it to the Convention. Lecointre refused, saying: "The matter has gone too far for me to go back." After this unjust refusal the two deputies ceased to see each other.

A few days after Lecointre had presented his libel, Bassal, living opposite him in the Rue du Bac, told me that on the day after the denunciation, and during the night, the house of his colleague was never free from the visits of countesses, duchesses, marchionesses, and viscountesses, and of all the former prisoners who came to congratulate and thank M. Lecointre, exciting him to cling to his resolution, and to proceed obstinately to the end. The Rue du Bac was so obstructed with carriages that one would have said the deputy of the Seine-et-Oise had become the greatest lord and the most eminent man in the capital.

Fréron and his partisans knew too well the spirit of Paris and the tactics of calumny to stop at the sight of these approbationary decrees. Fréron knew the credulity of Paris, the possibility of making them adopt anything by continued persuasion. After a certain time a calumny, however absurd and contradicted, if repeated twenty times, became an incontestable truth. Calumny is best perpetuated in this amiable and civilised city, where all conspire against the unfortunate, the feeble, the innocent, the poor, and the accused.

It was said that Fréron received 12,000 francs a month from the London commissaries for reaction,

to destroy the members of the Committee of Public Safety, who had committed the great crime of preventing Pitt and the kings of Europe from sleeping quietly for two years. Fréron gave twenty-four francs per number to his manufacturer or *finisher*, Dussault. Thanks to these arrangements he, the arch calumniator, reaped the chief reward.

Armed with the lying pages of the *Orateur du Peuple*, he circulated the most atrocious fables, the most absurd stories, chiefly against me. I would have blushed to have answered them. He accused me of silence, which the false infamy and insolent gossip of his pamphlets imposed.

This wicked and ungrateful deputy, forgetting that I had saved his life before the 9th of Thermidor by retaining the papers and correspondence of his mission to Marseilles, prevented me from speaking in the tribune, and ceaselessly interrupted me with insults. I answered him one day by one of those phrases which such people never pardon, because they are the expression of truth: "By what fatality must the French Republic be condemned, like the republic of letters, to have its Fréron too?"

The Progress of Reaction.

Reaction proceeded with great strides, with dry eye and uplifted arm coldly immolating its victims, of which the list increased daily. One should have heard the mass of petitioners inundating the Convention and changing the bar into a real camp of civil war; there was nothing but insults, denunciations, proscriptions, threats, and disdain for everything pertaining to the rights of the nation and liberty.

In spite of this concert of calumnies and curses, which occupied almost the whole of the meetings from the end of October, 1794, to the commencement of the following year, I did not let one day pass without going to the difficult and perilous post assigned to me by my country.

Yet I suffered much in these meetings, where hatred of liberty and disregard for the nation and interest for enemies were recognised as the only public virtues. I did not think for a moment that I could defend my country from such men. However, one day, not being able to endure such injustice and vexation, I again mounted the tribune. I represented to the astonished Convention the frightful dangers of the new position. I told them expressly that to foment divisions between the citizens in the same country was to renounce liberty openly; that if the members of the National Assembly did not unite, the constitution was destroyed, and that these divisions would end in throwing us into the arms of royalty.

At these words Tallien, Fréron, and especially a man from Languedoc named Chazal, who previously had not spoken, became enraged against me. He addressed me in insulting language in use at that time (that was the language of the day). I continued my speech and monarchical forebodings. Then Chazal, becoming more inflamed, asked to speak against me. You can well feel what disadvantage I was under, and what failure I should experience in the Convention of November, 1794. From this time forward I preserved absolute silence.

Accusations brought by Sieyès against the Old Committee.

I did not break it till I had to defend myself and my old colleagues against the accusations of "oppressing the French people by the Convention, and the Convention by the French people."

One must have the delicate talent, the theological dialectic, and the Sorbonnist subtlety of the Abbé Sieyès, the author of the title of this accusation, to understand its meaning. As to the author's intention, one can see it only too well. He tried to destroy the men of a government which was no more, and in such a case all means are good and easily understood, however complicated the language is. Yet how is it possible that a committee, re-elective every month, occupied with immense works, and charged with terrible responsibility, could acquire strength enough, and could hope with impunity to oppress thirty million men by managing a Convention of seven hundred deputies? How is it possible that at the same time it could blind and push this mass of people to crush and oppress an Assembly which deliberated daily, and was always mistress of its choice and wishes?

The absurdity of this accusation, which Sieyès invented, ought to have overthrown it. It seemed more established and better founded through its very impossibility and absurdity.

Again, we had three months of winter more rigorous and destructive than the reaction itself. The severity of the cold made food scarcer, wants greater, evils more insupportable; but all this served the projects of men who disturbed the peace of an unhappy people, and irritated their opinions by their wants and their passions by their calumnies.

The Seventy-three Deputies.

The Convention, with great though tardy justice, restored to liberty and to public deliberations the seventy-three deputies—the victims of the divisions which had prevailed during the time of the ever-detestable 31st of May. No doubt (I had professed this opinion in the sorrowful days which followed the outrage of the Commune of Paris) these deputies should never have been banished from the Assembly. In no case and under no pretext could they have been arrested and detained on account of their opinions, because the character of the deputy makes him irresponsible for the votes and opinions of his mandate; because the first and most essential right of national representation is the right of the inviolability of the representative. Without this there is no public freedom. One must call and recognise the divan of Constantinople, and cast oneself as a slave at the feet of a general or a king, a creator of a despotic dynasty. But as these principles are true and respectable, so the men who re-entered the Convention brought irritation and vengeance with them. A few days after their liberation from prison the Assembly was unrecognisable in its deliberations, in the violent speeches it allowed at the bar as at the tribune. It became a true arena of gladiators, in which the mass of the centre and the right, having united with the seventy-three, rose violently against the minority of courageous patriots firmly remaining on the left.

The Two United Committees interrogate the Old Members of the Committee of Public Safety—Commission of the Twenty-one—Chénier.

The newspapers of the time presented in all their details the passions and political madness of this fatal epoch, which has destroyed the vital principle of public liberty and national representation.

For me, who write but personal memoirs and not history, I proceed to what concerns me. The Convention, on Lecointre's denunciation, was forced to name, according to the wish of the leaders, a commission called the "Twenty-one" (because it was composed of twenty-one deputies), to examine the facts of the accusation. It was really a commission of the parliament Its principles and intentions, as well as its forms and perfidy, pertained to such a body.

Before this commission exercised its powers, the two united committees, under the presidency of Cambacérès, wanted to hear these members of the second committee (this was the third to judge us). I was the only one who explained several important things in this strange and shameful denunciation. Several deputies in this very numerous assembly interceded for me. I could see that they were convinced that an odious persecution was in preparation—a baseless accusation; but some other members who entered the committee by the force of reaction showed vengeance in their intentions as in their looks. Cambacérès presided with both coolness and impartiality. He did not defend the denounced nor favour the denunciations. They separated after midnight without deciding anything. I never knew the motives of this examination, that was begun by the

committees who had no right to sentence, nor did I discover the results of this long sitting of useless discussions. All was doubtless sent up, as among the Jews, from Caiaphas to Pilate.

At last the commission of the twenty-one prepared to accuse us in January. I was called alone, like my other colleagues. I heard the chief accusations read by two of our cruellest adversaries—by men whose own crimes should have made them refrain; but the word "refrain" was never known amongst reactionaries. I refuted all their complaints. But could one convince enemies who meant to ruin one? I had at least the satisfaction of showing them that they had not read the matters they charged me with. This negligence of the chief accusers appeared especially when they presented a letter sent from Switzerland in the spring of 1794 relating to the proposal made to me in the name of the Bourbons to rescue the son of Louis XVI. and take him to Switzerland, where I would find, in addition to renown, the most brilliant fortune for having betrayed my duties and my country.

Each of the members of the commission already considered me a royalist in communication with the Bourbons. But, having enlightened them on the facts of this letter, I begged the secretaries to read the deposition written on the back of the letter by me and signed by two members of the committee. Then they passed to another accusation, complaining that André Dumont had not well examined this letter before writing on the back.

I learned that the commission, after some debate, had postponed the meeting to another day to consider if they could found an accusation against Billaud, Collot, Vadier, and me.

I was then in the sad and perilous position of having an accusation brought against me in the midst of the clamours of reaction. It was supposed that I should not know what happened or what was plotted in this inquisitorial commission, of which Sieyès was leader, Saladin reporter, Sergent one of the secretaries, and Chénier the orator. But, by one of those chances which one only meets at long intervals, I learnt in Paris in 1800 all that passed against me in the commission of the twenty-one.

Operations of the Twenty-one Commissioners.

When the commissioners had examined all the evidence, facts, and acts of Lecointre's denunciation, the results of the conferences of the two committees, and the documents which these committees had sought out with care and sent to the commission, they deliberated on the impeachment. They commenced by voting on me. Of the twenty-one voters nineteen pronounced in my favour, absolving me from every accusation. Scarcely was the result published, when Sieyès rose and protested against this irregular mode of deliberating on a capital charge. It was impossible, he said, to vote on each person accused; the example of parliaments must be followed in a complex crime or question of this kind; they should deliberate on the accused *en masse*. He consequently asked that the division be annulled, and that they proceed to another vote on the four accused together. This fatal practice has never existed in parliaments where this inviolable maxim was established: Each accused person makes his own defence; for there can exist in favour of each facts more or less grave, circumstances

more or less extenuating or decisive. Such a shocking doctrine has never been pursued but by the commission of the three inquisitors at Venice, or perhaps at the inquisitions of Madrid, Goa, and Rome. For a time it prevailed with the twenty-one because it was presented in a subtle manner by Sieyès and supported by the tragic eloquence of the poet Chénier.

They returned, then, to this fatal vote, which, after a perfectly regular and deserved absolution by an imposing majority, confounded me in the same act of accusation as my three colleagues.

These inner details were communicated to me by Sergent, who drew up the minutes of those deliberations. I met him in 1800, in the spring, when he had been invited, like myself, to dine with M. Cerfberr, senior, of Strasburg, who lived with his family in the Rue Mont Blanc in Prince Hénin's large mansion. During dinner M. Cerfberr spoke of the persecutions I had undergone. Then Sergent declared that I should have been free if they had agreed to the first vote of the commission. He then explained to me all the facts which I have transcribed. When he had finished speaking, I asked him, in the presence of all, if he would give me these facts in writing, to place them in my Memoirs as proving my innocence and showing that, even in the commission of twenty-one, nineteen votes had absolved me. He promised to accede to my wish and to sign his declaration. I received his letter a few days afterwards; it is in my papers, and it can easily be added to my Memoirs.[1]

[1] This letter has not hitherto been discovered

My Detention.

Saladin, one of the seventy-three, was the worthy interpreter of this affair. I was at the Convention when he made his report. I expected to hear a just and enlightened reporter; I heard a desperado, a madman. When I saw the odious results of these incendiary words I could have set out immediately from the hall; I thought the committees of government intended to retire too, as it was nine o'clock. The night was dark, much snow was falling, each went sadly to his own home. I had the courage, too imprudent perhaps, of waiting till the hall was almost entirely empty, thinking that I should be arrested on the spot. I set out alone; I went to my home, Hôtel de Savalette, Rue Saint-Honoré. I could have sought refuge with several safe and generous persons: I stayed. At half-past ten the police came and occupied my ante-chamber and watched me until the debates of this strange procedure commenced in the Convention towards the end of February. Whilst I was watched in my room, some persons, endowed with that courage which the spirit of justice and hatred of persecution gives, constantly visited me. I will name amongst others M. l'Abbé Torné, bishop of Bourges, born in the Hautes-Pyrénées, a man full of nobility, patriotism, and courage, detesting reactionaries and persecutors; Madame de M——, a woman above her sex by her courage and devotion to her unhappy friends; M. de F——, a loyal citizen of a perfect character, who gave me constant proofs of his regard.

During the eight months of my detention, I was engaged on the following works:

1. "The defence of the Committee of Public Safety." A pamphlet of 105 octavo pages.

2. "A memoir of the members of the Committee of Public Safety, in answer to the accusations." Same size and number of pages.

3. A memoir entitled "Barère's Defence." A volume of 200 octavo pages. I had several thousand copies printed, which cost me six thousand francs. I intended to circulate them and to regain public opinion, but my enemies seized and obtained copies everywhere; they suppressed and burned them. This fact is noteworthy.

4. "A reply on the true authors of the Revolutionary Committees, Prisons and Judgments," &c.

5. A series of numbers titled "The Thens." Under this singular title I recalled to all the deputies of the Convention the motions they had presented, the opinions expressed, and the decrees they had passed; I compared all these facts with their present conduct and their accusations against me.

6. "A speech on my trial." A discourse I thought I could give from the tribune at the end of the debates of this case, but it has remained in my portfolio in manuscript.

Before my defence at the tribune, I had published seven numbers of observations against Saladin's impassioned and partial report.

The details relative to these observations and to the facts which followed their publication, are explained in the annexed note, which was written on the 22nd of February, 1795.

Note on the Observations which I published to defend myself against the Report of Saladin, President and Reporter of the Reactionary Commission of the Twenty-one.[1]

A picture of the ancient and modern proscriptions which the defenders of liberty and equality had incurred came quick as thought before my eyes, and I undertook from then the seven numbers of my defence, which I have published, and which would have opened blind eyes and dissipated public prejudices if there were any other remedies than time and events. Who reads justifications in Paris? Who does not pretend to be judge of the accusations? I worked also at my defence, in which I traced the incredible and odious course of this kind of procedure, which had been commenced against us six times, and from its forms was worthier of the inquisition of Madrid than of the first senate in the universe. I showed by the facts, events, and work of eighteen months that he who had consecrated all his time to the prosperity of the people, to the increase of the public treasury, to the enlargement of the national views, to the exaltation of popular energy, to the glory of the armies, to primary education, to the celebrity of the republican navy, could not be a tyrant of the people. I showed that he who had not ceased to defend the unity and integrity of national representation at all perilous times, who in all his public or private works had not ceased to celebrate this first authority, to pursue and denounce its revilers, to unmask its most ardent enemies, to point out hypocritical friends, could not be the oppressor of this same national representation.

[1] Inserted passage.

Far was I from thinking on the 12th of Germinal that—suddenly proscribed without being heard, judged without judgment, condemned without crime—I, an unhappy citizen, accused by anti-revolutionists, should be brutally taken from the national tribune. The instrument of this severity was one Lefèvre, a captain in the marching section of the National Guard. This officer, without a writ, and with a bitterness which only aristocracy could inspire, imprisoned me in my room, sending away my fellow-citizen who had passed the evening there, and placed in the surrounding apartments noisy patrols to disturb my sleep during the night. I stop here; my pen cannot now describe the annoyance those royalist subalterns wished to inflict on me that night. I prefer to report my recollections of that happy moment when we were forming the project of dwelling during the spring in a modest rustic cottage in the neighbourhood of Meudon. Then, again, they did not cease to tell me that all would be well in public affairs, that justice was not the order of the day in vain, that they had the best opinion of the issue of an affair which ought never to have arisen and still less have re-arisen after the startling act of justice of the 13th of Fructidor.

I was ignorant of what occurred in Paris on the 13th of Germinal. I was working at my own defence when the thunderbolt came and struck me, almost in the arms of consoling friendship. I do not complain of being sacrificed to my country if that sacrifice can be useful to her; but I complain of being confounded with tyrants of that country that I have served with all my mind and body, and that I shall always love

as long as I live. Such is the profession of faith of this heart which adores freedom, which is full of love of country, of France, which will be my last thought in the midst of some African desert or amongst savage nations. I have long awaited the justice of my contemporaries; but to-day all hope is lost. I wished to describe all they made me experience in that unpleasant journey of transportation, as well as the pleasing sentiments of my friends; but for some time I have felt my soul failing, dark presentiments disturb me during the night, and in the day I can see no probability of revisiting my native land. I have broken my pen.

The Former Members of the Committee of Public Safety accused before the Convention—Pelet de la Lozère—Collot—Billaud.

At last the hour of my public accusation rings; I am led by the police to the Convention. I am placed, whilst awaiting the opening of the meeting, in the president's room, behind his chair. Pelet de la Lozère was president at that time. Always unknown and silent in the Convention, he was brought to light by the reaction. Conversation soon began between us. I told him my indignation that after so much work, so many services to the public, so many eulogiums of my conduct by the Convention, I should have to play the painful part of accused; that I should be called the oppressor of my country—I, who had consecrated to it, with complete devotion and disinterestedness, the fairest years of my life, my vigils, my fortune, and my whole existence.

"What can you do against the force of circum-

stances? There are people who have suffered much; they complain. We must sacrifice four members of the National Convention to save the remainder." "You speak like Pilate," I replied; "you speak more as the chief of the Jews than of the French." Our conversation ended with those words. That is the moral of the reactionists.

The meeting begins, the debates on our case proceed; they ought never to have begun if they did not wish to establish *public ingratitude* as a principle. Collot thought to dispose the Convention in his favour by a general speech on the events which had led the principal acts of the government from the beginning of 1793 to the end of 1794. There were very remarkable movements of eloquence, but he spoke to passions which are without entrails or ears. Billaud courageously made some short observations which tended to justify the operations that the most imperious circumstances had obliged the committee to make in order to save the country from danger.

My Defence.

The meeting was adjourned till the next day and seemed intended to examine my conduct. When it opened I demanded, after a short and modest exordium, that the different charges should be read that I might refute them successively, and in the midst of contrary passions make the legal justification clear of three members of the committee, who had been chosen by the accusation, out of nine members who took part in the same work.

I was first accused of having filled France with

revolutionary committees, prisons, and tribunals to judge the imprisoned.

1. To justify myself on that point I unfolded to the Assembly the decrees from which these measures of repression, which had degenerated into tyranny, had resulted.

2. I showed that it was to John Debry they owed the motion to establish those numerous revolutionary committees which arose in November, 1792. The Committee of Public Safety did not then exist.

3. I read the decree which created the revolutionary tribunal on Danton's proposal in February, 1793. The Committee of Public Safety did not exist either at that time; it was established only on the 6th of April.

4. I read the proposal made by Merlin, in the name of the Committee of Legislation, establishing the odious law of suspects. Hence it was not the work of the Committee of Public Safety.

5. I afterwards quoted a series of decrees made *proprio motu* by the Convention on the motions of different members, as, for example, the one which extended the law of suspects, on the proposal of Clauzel, to all the ex-constituents, &c. It appeared to me that I was inspired to reproduce that list of revolutionary laws, all emanating from the Convention itself, without the intervention of the Committee of Public Safety—laws whose execution was referred by the same decrees to the Committee of General Surety, and which, consequently, could be laid in no way, neither as to their proposal nor execution, at the door of a committee of government whose principal operations had to do with diplomatic and military affairs, food, and public administration. It seemed to me, I

repeat, that this list of the political and legislative errors of the Convention had a considerable effect on the Assembly, and still more on the public. The Convention blushed at its procedure against us, and at its own faults, which alone caused the calamities of the Revolution.

After having heard this legal justification of our operations, the Assembly, by a sort of spontaneous movement, rose at four o'clock and adjourned. After the meeting, two deputies, P——, a close friend of Fréron, and Ch——, came to me and said that, if I would declare from the tribune the facts relating to Collot and Billaud, during the last events at Lyons, I should be by a private decree placed beyond debate and accusation. I replied: "Since I am placed amongst the accused, I must defend myself with them. I can only leave by an act of justice, not of cowardice. I will never accuse colleagues whom the iniquity of our judges has made as miserable as myself."

Some Facts about Collot's Mission to Lyons.

Here are the facts I was asked to publish; and I relate them here because they belong to the history of this time. Lyons surrendered after a long siege. Collot, Fouché, and several commissaries were sent there to remedy the disorders to which this unhappy town was given up. General Ronsin was in command there. I knew not what occurred at Lyons, for Billaud alone was occupied with the correspondence of the representatives on missions. In the meantime I received through the post the dreadful proclamation issued at Lyons when the grape-shot firing was performed. This document was signed "Ronsin, General."

I was told by letter that these facts ought to be submitted by me to the committee, otherwise it would never know them and could not cure so much evil.

After having read this proclamation, which was written in a barbarous style, I ran to the committee. At midnight, when the meeting commenced, I read the letter and the proclamation. The committee was unanimously indignant at it. They thought that Collot should come forward and give an account of the events at Lyons, and of the execution of the Convention's decrees. Billaud wrote immediately to his friend Collot. The latter came to Paris in a few days; but, instead of coming to give his account to the committee, he left them ignorant of his arrival during the whole night. He saw but Billaud, who was also silent. At last he appeared in the Assembly at eleven o'clock, and begged the Assembly to hear the account of the work of the commissaries of the Convention who had been sent to Lyons for the execution of its decrees. It was thought that Collot, a member of the committee, had just come from it and had made his report to it. So he was heard, approved, applauded. The printing of his speech was voted. The Convention even went farther; it declared that the conduct of the representatives and commissaries sent to Lyons was good, and approved of it.

Collot, proud of his success, and regarding the members of the committee, and myself especially, as his enemies, because he himself was very passionate, got the secretaries of the Convention to issue immediately a copy of the decree given in his favour and in favour of the other commissaries, his friend Ronsin included. Armed with this decree he appeared

unexpectedly in the committee-room where we were deliberating. He advanced with blazing eyes and threatening attitude, and threw a terrifying glance on me. "Read this decree," said he. "The Convention knows my conduct, and has approved everything done by its commissaries and representatives at Lyons. I do not know why the committee recalls me, but I will answer the denunciations when necessary." I thought those last words referred to me, and I replied: "I have read an atrocious proclamation signed by Ronsin. I would consider myself guilty of high treason to humanity if I did not send it to the committee as soon as it came to my knowledge. I have never denounced anyone. Billaud, who must have informed you, can say if I have pronounced your name. I have exposed Ronsin's work. I have done my duty as a man and a citizen; I fear nothing."

Result of the Trial of the Former Members of the Committee of Public Safety.

I now return to the trial which brought us before the Convention. Public opinion, in spite of the newspapers of Fréron and Tallien, in spite of the continual vociferations of the subaltern agents of reaction, was already declaring in favour of the accused; and the National Convention saw itself directly compromised by the debates. It let three days pass without hearing us, under pretext of being engaged with legislation and parliamentary affairs, in which the predominant party was always increasing in barbarity, atrocious vengeance, and exaggeration.

The accusation of the commission of twenty-one included, as I have said, four accused: Collot, Billaud,

Vadier, and myself. The two first and I stood to defend ourselves ; but Vadier, who repeated, like the celebrated president of the Parliament of Paris, De Harlay, "If they accused him of having taken the two towers of Notre Dame, his first movement would be to escape this absurd accusation by flight"—Vadier followed this advice. He concealed himself in Paris, and let the contra-revolutionary furies burst on his colleagues less timid or less incredulous in the justice of men.

The third sitting devoted to our trial was occupied by me, since I voluntarily undertook to fully refute all the accusations, which were only legitimate in the mouths of French people, and which compromised the Convention itself, alone author, alone guilty of all the events and decrees that it had deliberated and directed.

It was in this meeting of the first days of Germinal, year III. (1795), that there arose in my favour several justifying facts—facts emanating from the bosom of the Assembly. It was then that the revelations of Delville, deputy of the Eure, covered my enemies with shame and made them fear that I would escape them. In fact there was manifested throughout the hall and in the galleries such a movement of satisfaction and enthusiasm, such acclamation and applause was given to the accused at the tribune, together with this generous, loyal Delville who declared that he owed his safety and his life to me, that the accusers asked the court to rise. Several days passed before they resumed.

Sieyès—Robespierre's Opinion of him.

During this interval my enemies, who sought not justice but exile, devised the means of attaining their

end. They were completely seconded by the Abbé Sieyès, the soul of all inquisitions and proscriptions.

The Abbé Sieyès was already known to be the real and secret author of all the ambitious and oppressive projects of the Girondins during the last months of the Legislative Assembly. He was also known to have continued more actively still to be the counsellor and mover of the same Girondins at the Convention. Robespierre, who observed him, and sought the means of defeating him, called him the *Mole of the Revolution.* "The Abbé Sieyès does not appear," said he; "but he is ever acting underground in the National Assembly. He directs and confounds everything; he raises earth and disappears; he creates factions, puts them in motion, moves them against one another, keeps at a distance to profit afterwards, if the circumstances suit him."

That is how Robespierre once spoke before me in the Committee of Public Safety after Danton's death. He then sought to get rid of Sieyès, for he feared all men of resource, talent, and reputation.

I had little to be satisfied with in the underhand, selfish abbé in the Constituent and Conventional assemblies; however, my sentiment of natural justice inspired me to defend the deputy against the man whom I regarded, since the 31st of May, as the enemy of national representation. I asked Robespierre what was the tendency of the speech just delivered against Sieyès. "I ask," said he with bilious anger, "that you examine the conduct of this deputy severely; he is more dangerous to liberty than all those to whom the law has done justice this day."

12th of Germinal—The Mass of the Abbé Sieyès.

Sieyès lost no time in furnishing the reactionists with new arms. Whilst our trial was in suspense, he proposed to pass a decree of high policy relative to riots and insurrections. He asked, amongst other things, that a great bell be put on the pavilion of the Tuileries, to sound the tocsin in case of riot or public disturbances, and that at the sound of this tocsin the forty-eight armed sections should assemble round the Convention and defend it. This decree contained a crowd of penal dispositions besides and many snares spread under pretext of insurrection.

On being informed of this decree in presence of my two policemen, I exclaimed, "God preserve you from the mass of the Abbé Sieyès!" I meant by this his sectionary toscin and his systematic proscriptions. The words became a proverb, and when on the 12th of Germinal, year III., the belfry of the Tuileries was heard ringing and the battalions were seen hastening to the Convention, the people said, "Let us hear the mass of the Abbé Sieyès."

It was only on my return from exile in 1800, that M. Daitec, a sculptor, born in the Pyrenees, who had constantly followed the phases of the revolution at Paris, informed me of the events of the 12th of Germinal. I could not have even suspected the hour at which they took place, since I had seen nobody on the evening before or that day, as I was under the guard of two policemen, who slept in my room. M. Daitec, who went to the Tuileries out of curiosity on hearing the tocsin of the pavilion, penetrated into the Carrousel, which was full of people; he afterwards entered the hall of the Convention with the crowd. He told me that this

mass of riotous workmen in the Carrousel, who threatened the safety of the Convention by their outcries, demanded a *constitution and bread*. He questioned several of the men who had gathered round the door of the assembly to get in, uttering threats and terrible cries; some who thought him of their party said to him: "It's all right, our business will be soon ended; they have only given five francs to each of the principals, and all will finish at noon." The insurgents entered the hall, and took possession of the benches which several members who were not in the secret of the riot had abandoned. They tumultuously demanded bread of the president, and that the constitution of 1793 would be carried out.

If we believe some phlegmatic observers, this pretended sedition was but a freak. The cries raised by some agents arose from time to time, and ceased again. When the authors of the riot thought an advantageous time had arrived, they led up an armed force, to which the pretended rioters gave in at once, and retired into the faubourgs, where Barras and Fréron and such men had gone to get them to riot for five francs a head.

The Four Old Members of the Committee of Public Safety are condemned to Transportation.

When all was finished, the Committees of Public Safety and General Surety declaimed against the four accused, and considered them as the authors of this strange revolt, which had made an attempt on the safety of the Convention. One of the reporters exclaimed that they would end this business of the accused, and thereby popular revolts, by sentencing

them immediately, without any other form of trial, to transportation to Cayenne.

In such circumstances everything is prepared, it is sufficient to make a move. The Convention then passed the proposal, which had been long meditated by the authors of our denunciation. Thus we have always seen, at each crisis of the Revolution, the leaders of the victorious party making victims and proclaiming exile as a measure of national justice. These miserable deputies, the agents of counter-revolution, were not worthy to be the lictors of Sulla, Marius, Antonius, Lepidus, and Octavius, and they thus disposed by a riot, got up by corruption, of the life and honour of a good citizen who had sacrificed his fortune, his work, and even his life to the defence of the rights of the people and the freedom of France.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE STATEMENT ADDRESSED BY BARÈRE TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.[1]

10th of October, 1792—First Mark of Confidence from the Convention—I am nominated Member of the Constitutional Committee.

On the 10th of October, I was nominated a member of the Committee of Constitution with the citizens Sieyès, Thomas Paine, Brissot, Pétion, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Danton, and Cordorcet (*Moniteur*, No. 286). Sensible of this first proof of the confidence of the Convention, I have never ceased since then to work with my colleagues at the tasks entrusted to us. I was charged with the declaration of rights and the part concerning judicial power.

I do not fear to appeal to the evidence of Sièyes, the only other member of the committee who has survived the storms of the Revolution.

[1] This unpublished document, which is a corollary to the part of Barère's Memoirs published in this volume, was begun in Floréal, year III. (1795), in the citadel of the Isle of Oleron, and continued in Saintes prison. In it Barère justifies his conduct; and in order to do so reviews the whole history of the Revolution and gives his opinion on the principal men of that day. He often expresses different opinions to those he wrote in later parts of his Memoirs, but he always faithfully reflects the spirit of the period in which he is writing.

I ask him to declare if he has not seen me constantly in our debates vote and present editorials relating to the division of the legislative body into sections for the creation of the law; propose or adopt all means suited to maintain public peace and the security of persons and property, to stifle anarchy, and establish civil liberty on the most extended basis. Let him say if the declaration of rights I presented did not proclaim principles opposed to every partial insurrection and to all private ambition; let him say if the judicial part was not, as well as this declaration, almost entirely like the bills brought forward at this moment for discussion in the Assembly by the commission of eleven.

The first committee counted among its members a philosopher as famous as he has been unfortunate. It is this sincere friend of liberty and humanity who has given us the elements of the Constitutional Act and a great part of the editorials presented to the Convention.

When one has marched under this banner and placed one's signature to a project of social agreement which enunciates so many wise, politic, and moral principles, one can defy one's enemies and throw on one's continual accusers all the odium of their venal calumnies. How can I, then, be comprised in the accusation which has been made against the triumvirs who directed the work of the constitution of 1793, of having wished to banish all information, all discussion of a work elaborated (people say) in a few days, then presented by tyranny, and accepted by terror?

19th of October—Appeal to the Intelligence of all Citizens for the Projected Constitution.

See what I did when I was a member of the first constitutional committee; hear what I said from the tribune of the Convention to all enlightened citizens of the Republic, to all the publicists of Europe (*Moniteur* No. 29, meeting of the 19th of October).

"At the moment when the representatives of the French people are engaged in tracing the plan of a constitution, they ought to surround themselves with every possible source of information, interrogate everywhere the genius of liberty, gather the benefits of the freedom of the press, call all the citizens to a conference on the editing of the condition of the new social compact, to give public opinion the solemn initiative that belongs to it on all objects interesting the nation.

"The constitution of a great republic should not be the work of a few minds, it should be the work of the human mind. You have composed the Constitutional Committee of twenty-nine members, but anyone outside the Convention in France and Europe who can trace out a plan of a constitution is a necessary member of the committee; he should be invited to publish his thoughts.

"The emulation excited by public notice has always produced the happiest effects. At Athens, in the beautiful days of the Republic, the magistrate, at certain times, made the following proclamation: 'Let every citizen with views to propose on legislation mount the tribune.' The National Convention ought to give that invitation to all the friends of liberty and equality, to represent to it their plans, views, and

means to give a good constitution to the French Republic." (Adopted.)

16th of December, 1792—Expulsion of Orleans, Pache, and Roland.

To a political observer, the affairs of Louis Capet became each day a book of discoveries. He could perceive through the different opinions and the shock of passions what had been the object in the secret elections of the deputies of Paris; what dexterity certain men used in appearing republicans and pursuing Capet in order to substitute another tyrant in his place; what men belonged to this system. Sunday, the 16th of December, seemed consecrated to petitioners. It was occupied by every party passion, by every private ambition; and the very stormy meeting lasted till eight o'clock.

First, the Convention decrees death to whoever proposes or tries to break the unity of the Republic, or detach from it its integral parts in order to unite them to a foreign country. Buzot thinks the measure insufficient, and proposes, in order to reassure the enemies of royalty, that the deputy Orleans and his children, should expiate, by being banished from French territory, the misfortune of being born near a throne, of having known its maxims and received its examples, and thus remove a name which could serve to rally factionists and the emissaries of foreign powers.

In spite of the adjournment demanded, Louvet spoke and recalled in an eloquent speech what history relates of the total expulsion of the Tarquins, which was carried out to reassure the Romans. He demanded

the total expulsion of the Bourbons, even of those detained in the Temple.

The adjournment was again moved till after the trial of Louis Capet.

Lanjuinais recalled the disastrous and bloody time when Philippe of Orleans, taking the name of "Égalité" on this occasion, was elected the twenty-fourth deputy of Paris, after those who were to partake in his protectorate. He recalled that numerous band of commissaries sent by the commune of Paris who were to frighten the rising Republic by the massacre of prisoners in all the departments. "Here," said he, "are the proofs that all these men march to royalty." He ended by saying that the children of Orleans were at the head of the army, and he supported Buzot's motion.

Saint-André, Chabot, Thuriot, Saint-Just, Camille Desmoulins, and a great number of deputies of the Left supported the adjournment. Desmoulins said that such a motion was a trap, and that *if this decree were passed France was lost*. Merlin of Thionville demanded that they should adopt Buzot's motion, and that the executive power be reorganised.

Then two very pronounced opinions were manifested; the one (on the Left) against Roland, the other (on the Right) against Pache. A tranquil observer amidst these violent debates, I proposed a bill which tried secret projects and private friendships. I attacked Orleans and the two ministers, and demanded the expulsion of the one from the Convention and of the others from the ministry. Good faith and patriotism would have frankly adopted these proposals, for which priority was demanded, but they only aggravated the parties and agitated the Assembly.

"What was then my private opinion? Did it favour any royal, protectoral, or ministerial tyranny? You are going to judge me by my words on those three men, who have exercised but a too fatal influence on the opinions and movements of the Assembly, and on the revolutionary events which the adoption of my bill would have spared France.

"I declare then that my proposal tends to remove all men who threaten liberty from my country. I have seen for some time past that though we have proclaimed the abolition of royalty, ideas of royalty have been rising around us.

"They seek to lead the public opinion astray. They say: 'If they do not slay the tyrant, we shall accuse them of having allied themselves with tyrants; if they put him to death it is cruelty unworthy of the French nation.' Thus they want to surround your judgment with riots and disturbances. Merlin, in telling you that those who threaten freedom must depart, Merlin has deserved well of his country. But I do not see that our enemies alone are the men who have had the misfortune of being born of tyrants, there are also the men who have great popularity, great renown, great power.

"You would be unworthy of a republic if you thought that ostracism ought not to lay low the heads threatening liberty. When Roland denounced the crimes of the scoundrels of the 2nd of September, they wished to send him away; he had but done his duty. Pache, overwhelmed by the weight of an immense ministry, complained of the malpractice of which he could not have been the cause. Roland's friends demanded Pache's dismissal. I asked myself

if we were sent here to create or destroy, protect or persecute ministers. No! let every man who has seen us draw up in two lines of gladiators to protect them depart hence. (Cheers.) Opinion will judge them. But they are dangerous, they wound us, they divide us; and I say that the decree must be adopted in its entirety. I demand that my motion relative to Orleans, Roland, and Pache, be decreed that the committee of constitution present a proposal for the renewal of ministers." (Loud cheers.)

In vain, Tallien, Legendre, Rewbell, Drouet, and Billaud proposed the adjournment; the majority demanded the reading of my motion, but the tumult of the minority opposed it. "A National Convention cannot exist," said I, "if when the majority has shown its will its resolutions are not executed." I was insulted, pursued with shouting and cries of "Down with Barère!" which came from the Left. They demand my recall to order; they say my bill attacks the sovereignty of the people. This is my answer: "I have just heard the cause of the trouble; it arises because there is a question of public right attached to my proposal. But this question only wants to be discussed in a few words. 'One of the members of the branch of Bourbon-Capet is,' they say, 'a representative of the nation.' ('That is it!' exclaimed many.) I can state my thoughts, I am going to express them all: you are not performing an act of ostracism, not a constitutional act, but a general law of security. Among the members of this family there was a man robed in national power, but the King had also a hereditary representative character, and yet the people have thrown down the tyrant, they have thrown down the

hereditary representative; they have done well, they have founded liberty. A vicious and incoherent constitution which could only work the misery of the nation, raised the former King to the rank of representative, although a minority always opposed the infernal spirit of revision, though full of respect for the majority, for it knows the principles of national representation.

"The nation has deprived him of his power.

"This is the moment to exercise a revolutionary measure, but to pretend that in the same manner another deputy could be ejected from the Assembly, another individual robed with the same representation, this is what I deny. I distinguish between the representatives of the people, who, like us, are within the common law, from those who are heirs to the throne, outside the common law. After having announced my opinions, I insist that they should be discussed."—(*Moniteur*, No. 353.)

The discussion continued, but it was late. The tired passions adjourned the case of Orleans for two days, and that of the minister indefinitely. Only the banishment of the Bourbons was voted at this meeting, with the exception of those detained in the Temple.

When, on the 19th of October, the expulsion of Philip of Orleans, known as Égalité, was being deliberated:

"It matters little to me," said Buzot, "at what time the vote I ask is passed, provided that after the judgment of Louis XVI. I do not see his successor behind the screen."

Fayau, after praising the civic virtues of Philip

Égalité, demanded the report of the decree issued on Sunday, and the order of the day on the rest of my project. But an immense crowd, with the mayor of Paris (Chambon), asked, in the name of the forty-eight sections to appear at the bar, to present an address relative to the report of the decree on the Bourbons. The Assembly heard this petition.

On the same day Laurent Lecointre had published a speech printed at Badouin's, extolling the patriotism of the Orleans family, and complaining of the national ingratitude towards this Bourbon. He styled the Convention "barbarous" for having the republican idea of expelling the Tarquins. Yet this same Lecointre has overwhelmed me with calumnies, and accused me of tyranny, though he never ceased to praise and fawn upon Philip Bourbon Orleans, whose tyranny already threatened us by the organisation of his assassins and their riots. It is rendering a service to my country to unmask Lecointre, and to recall some of the speeches he made in favour of Philip Égalité. We should see what this modern Brutus is.

It was Pétion who suspended the execution of the decree of expulsion against the Bourbons, and the discussion was adjourned till after Capet's judgment.

1st of February, 1793—Declaration of war against England and Holland—Note of an address to the English people against the hostile decrees of its government.

On the 1st of February, 1793, Brissot declared war against England and Holland. It was proposed to send an address to the English people to unmask the hostile intrigues of its government.

"This address," said I, "will show the difference

the French Convention makes between the English people and their perfidious government. It will leave the despot in all his nudity, charged with all the responsibility of a war undertaken solely to satisfy vain pride. The address proposed is not impolitic."

The Convention voted the address. Condorcet, Paine, and Fabre d'Eglantine were to write it.

We entrusted the duty of writing it to Condorcet. He had already, as a citizen and political philosopher, presented addresses of this kind to the Dutch and Spanish against the scourge of war which menaced them, and on the advantages of liberty. As to Thomas Paine, it was too hard for him to communicate his ideas, being unacquainted with our language. We abandoned, then, to the philanthropic genius of Condorcet the trouble of editing it.

A few days after Condorcet brought me his work, telling me to communicate it to Fabre d'Eglantine. It was an address, not to the English, but to the nations of Europe. The plan was vast, and it struck all our allied enemies at the same time.

The speech seemed to me the masterpiece of the wise and philanthropic talent which characterised the works of Condorcet. He spoke twice of the bloody scenes of the Revolution, and he, in the name of the nation, flung the responsibility of the massacres of the 2nd of September on their execrable authors, and on the hypocritical and atrocious enemies of our true principles and our liberty.

These were precisely the passages whose publication was so necessary at that time, which would perhaps have spared us further madness and crime; these were the passages of the address which frightened

Fabre d'Eglantine. He refused to give his adhesion if the writing was not changed.

True talent is modest. Condorcet toned down some expressions. In spite of this, Fabre still disapproved. He even said that the address was wider than the Convention wished, and that he would strongly oppose its adoption.

In the meantime circumstances changed, the torrent of public affairs bore the Assembly with it. The address was not asked for by the Convention, and, at Condorcet's wish, it remained in my hands. I kept it religiously as the production of a man of genius and of a persecuted philosopher, but in the month of Brumaire, year II., Hébert and Chaumette threatened to fix seals on my papers in the name of the revolutionary committee. The despotism of this committee was ceaselessly directed and moved by the factious leaders of the Commune of Paris. I was then compelled to burn this speech, lest I should be accused of having prepared an accusation against the villains of the 2nd of September, who were sitting in the Commune, and who at this disastrous time had more power in Paris than the Convention and Committee of Public Safety.

I here wish to pay my tribute of praise and admiration to a learned philosopher who is esteemed by Europe. We know that he was denounced by Chabot and arrested on his motion. Sometime before, on the 30th of June, 1793, André Dumont denounced him in the name of the Committee of General Surety, and in the same meeting Legendre persecuted and insulted him. One of these madmen demanded the arrest of all the deputies of the Aisne

on account of Condorcet's letter on the events of the 31st of May, a letter which the deputies, composed of wise and honest men, had sent to his constituents; another wished to adopt still stronger measures. These terrible denunciations and motions were sent to the Committee of Public Safety, where, owing to my intervention, they had no effect; but, for Condorcet, there was no time to save him and to preserve him for science and the French Republic.

The 15th of February, 1793—The Constitution is presented by Condorcet and Gensonné.

Condorcet read the introduction to our work. I was then nominated to fill the office of reporter of the debates, and I brought up for discussion the articles of the Declaration of Rights, one after the other.

The Left did not approve of this system of constitution, which, as I have already said, much resembled that presented by the Commission of Eleven, save that it had more form, perfection, and more energetic forms of government. They turned it into ridicule on the 15th of February, when it was read. Amongst other things, our project reproduced the system of the two Houses of Parliament in England. The law ought to be the work of two deliberating bodies. These bodies formed a necessary check in a single National Assembly, where the deliberations always improvised make and report laws the same day in the same sitting. There is not a citizen who did not feel the necessity of obviating the dangers of such a system. Out of three plans presented to the Constitutional Committee one only was read, the one the committee had adopted,

and it had thought it useful to the discussion of the constitution to print these three methods of law-making. These measures became a means of accusation against the members of the committee and of depreciation against their works in the meeting of the 20th of February.

The 20th of February—Denunciation of the First Constitutional Committee—Defence of the Plan presented.

Amar complained that in page 103 of the printed copy of the project, there was a proposal to establish two chambers in the legislative body. Julien demanded that the committee be declared to have betrayed the confidence of the Convention. We expected to see the shadow of Lameth rise up and the plan of revision adopted by the Constituent Assembly.

The committee was guilty of high treason. I was the only member of the committee present in the Assembly. I demanded and obtained permission to reply to these accusations. This is what I said:

"I was at the Committee of General Defence when the discussion which you so heatedly discuss was commenced, and I entered the hall when the incrimination of the Constitutional Committee struck my ear. Certainly it is a strange, if not a novel, manner to try to wither at its birth the project you have charged your committee to give you. This artifice of calumniators, of surrounding things with distrust, suspicions, and accusations, is well known when persons cannot be attacked. Now it is the mode of forming a law, the printing of which is censured, I know not with what motive or pretext. But if people so inclined to suspect and so prompt to accuse were equally ready to recall

what has been said, they would retract what they say in this tribune during the absence of the committee. Freedom, like the other great human passions, is jealous, but it should know neither fury nor injustice. The plan of the social compact was submitted to public reason, to the judgment of twenty-five million men. We are no longer in the age when nations, trusting to the reason of two or three men, abandon their rights to the isolated projects or the particular combinations of these legislators; neither can reason to-day be refuted by clamour nor annihilated by calumny. These are the facts as they occurred; the Convention will judge them.

"We have discussed with the greatest care the different principles developed in the project.

"When we arrived at the manner of forming the law, in a part of the title concerning the legislative body, several projects were presented by the members of the committee. All have been examined. One of them having obtained a majority of votes was selected. As to the others, they can only be published in a note or variant of the constitution to show how conscientious the work of the committee has been.

"It is one of the great difficulties to be overcome in the organisation of one Assembly, subject to sudden impulses, to find in the Assembly itself an efficacious means of staying and ripening discussion. We thought to serve public opinion, facilitate deliberation, utilise our researches, by presenting several projects on so important a matter.

"Besides, the Assembly receives and reads several bills daily before considering their priority. Where, then, is our crime? I think if we had created several

drafts of a constitution, in which the rights of the people would have been equally preserved, and the principles of public and civil liberty equally assured, we should have deserved well of the National Convention. You have given us the honourable and difficult business of presenting a constitution, but have you given us infallibility? We give you our ideas only with the thought of fulfilling a sacred duty and of aiding you to found the sovereignty of the people in all its purity. I am proud of having placed my signature to this work, because it established liberty on its widest basis, because it destroyed intrigue and factions, because it establishes the principle of the censure of the people on the acts of its representatives, and assures them a means of resisting all kinds of oppression.

"Remember also what Condorcet said in his report to develop the three modes of forming a law, against which such vehemence is used to-day.

"You know them. . . . . I have but one word to add for those who wish to suspect and accuse when they should reason and reflect.

"The Inquisition compelled Galileo to beg pardon for having discovered the movement of the earth. In France there are men who dare to propose that the constitutional committee should beg pardon for having found a means of organising the democracy, of establishing a real Republic, and of exercising the rights *of* the people *by* the people."

Immediately the Assembly unanimously passed the order of the day, Marat was standing at my side in the tribune ready to go on calumniating the project and the members of the committee. I asked that Marat be heard against the committee. He and several others

of his party spoke. I replied, and got a decree passed that the explanation of the modes of formation of the law should be distributed only to the members of the Assembly. Thus was this great uproar calmed, the precursor of so many other storms.

13th of March, 1793—Defence of the Dignity of the Convention.

On the 13th of March Vergniaud denounced in detail the facts which he knew relative to the conspiracy of the nights of the 9th and 10th against the Convention. He unmasked the impious and atrocious coalition formed between the leaders of some sections, of Jacobins, Cordeliers, of the Electoral Club, and some men of the Commune of Paris. He asked that proceedings be taken against the conspirators, and an address issued to the departments.

Marat followed. "No one is more sorry," said he, "than I am at seeing two parties here, one of which does not wish, while the other is not able, to save their country. He accused those who had appealed to the people of wishing to preserve tyranny, and, after having said that he had proposed to the popular society to defend the Convention, he asked them to consider recruiting and the ministry.

I will not reproduce the long and violent debates that arose on the printing of the speeches of Marat and Vergniaud. Marat's was obtained first; the other was discussed.

This scandalous meeting made me indignant. I demanded and obtained a hearing, after Vergniaud indignant at seeing the divisions of the Assembly, had himself asked for the report of the decree of printing

his speech, and the executive council had given an account of the events of the 9th and 10th of March.

"I support Vergniaud's proposition," said I, "and the report of the decree. I believe this proposition to be founded on wisdom. If I were Brunswick I would pay this meeting well." [Loud cheers.]

"I attack no one; I only oppose the measure. A conspiracy has been denounced; the details must be collected that the conspirators may be punished.

"Vergniaud spoke of grave facts. He has given the names of the insurgent sections; he has spoken of a revolutionary committee. . . . . I recognise no other than the National Convention.

"Its seven hundred and forty-eight members are the only revolutionary committee which France can and ought to support.

"They speak of an insurrectionary committee! Against whom this insurrection? There is now but the nation on the throne. There can be no insurrection but that of brigands, of the agents of Louis, and the emissaries from Vienna, Berlin, and Madrid.

"Aristocracy is awakening! Already it has thrown the seeds of discord among you. It throws itself into this Assembly, disguised under the mask of patriotism.

"A section declared itself before a council of the Commune in a state of permanent insurrection. The council asked what it meant, and it answered, 'a permanent army.' This name belongs only to the whole of France.

"They speak of insurrection. Well, you insurgents of Paris! go and fight against the scoundrels of Austria and Prussia to prove the ardent love of freedom with which you say you are animated.

"But the committee you speak of hoist other colours. Theirs are proscriptions and the robbery of the public treasure. To prove this, at the time the committee existed, the sections wrote that sovereignty ought to be provisionally exercised by the department of Paris. . . . .

"If there is a conspiracy, we should all be its objects, its enemies, its denouncers.

"I return to the proposition ordering the printing of Vergniaud's speech. I see matters disturbing to the departments, touching facts not yet on a regular procedure. Marat has uttered a phrase full of dangerous venom. 'One part of the Assembly,' said he, 'does not wish to save the Republic, the other part cannot.'

"The Convention cannot spread such ideas without great danger. You will weaken public confidence, which is necessary to you, and which you deserve."

The report of the decree ordering the printing of these two speeches was adopted.

The Brief Establishment of a New Committee under the Name of a Committee of Public Safety and of General Defence, (from the 26th of March to the 6th of April).

The rebels of the Vendée and of the Deux Sèvres were already masters of the districts of Chollet, Montaigu, and Clisson. General Marié had massacred, through imprudence or treason, the volunteers he commanded. On the other side, the Belgian events, the despotism and treason of the generals, the non-execution of the decree of the 15th of December, had nullified Dumouriez' obstinacy, all this announced the weakness of the government.

The Committee of General Defence was charged to end the disturbances of the Convention by a report and efficacious measures; but anyone attending the meetings of the committee would not be surprised at the flood of misfortunes that deluged the Republic. There was no energy there. The discussions always wandered into vagueness; the executive council was more occupied with defending itself than with action, and when it acted it always entrenched itself behind some means of saving its responsibility. The generals did not obey a committee always deliberating and always divided. It was in its midst that those passions burst forth which would not dare do so at the Convention; and it was only the Republic that did not enter into the object of the violent discussions or the political debates.

Quinette, who often witnessed these uncivic and stormy scenes, felt, like me, the necessity of establishing a committee with more authority, more concentration, with more energetic means of defence, and with a serious and active deliberation. He saw, like me, the Robespierres, Dantons, and their lieutenants, Fabre d'Églantine, Camille Desmoulins, &c., put forward plans of dictatorship and speak of the necessity of an energetic power to save the country. It was this that made him, in the meeting of the 22nd of March, go back on the decree which I had carried the evening before for the creation of a Committee of Public Safety and of General Defence. A fortnight ago," said he, "the Committee of Public Safety and of General Defence offered its resignation and you decreed that it be replaced. As soon as any proposal is made in this Assembly to con-

centrate the executive power of the Convention, the cry of dictatorship is raised, and you do not see that it is the only means of avoiding dictatorship. Do not dissimulate; if you do not take all the measures necessary for the safety of the State, you will see a man arise with talent enough to govern, who——" (violent murmurs). "I only state my fears, and I am showing you the remedy for this danger.

"The two parties who are in the National Assembly and who wish at least—I like to believe it—to save their country, must approach and understand each other. If their purpose be the same, they will succeed; if not, they will watch each other.

"I ask that the Committee of General Defence present, in twenty-four hours, the organisation of the Committee of Public Safety and of General Defence decreed yesterday." (Cheers.)

On the 26th of March the Assembly nominated the members who were to form the new committee and to replace the Committee of General Defence. Composed of contrary elements, it bore in itself the germ of its destruction. But the Assembly then thought that if they thus united the representatives of the two opinions which divided it, the country would be better defended. The citizens Dubois-Crancé, Pétion, Gensonné, Guyton-Morveau, Robespierre the elder, Danton, Barbaroux, Rhul, Vergniaud, Fabre d'Églantine, Buzot, Delmas, Guadet, Condorcet, Bréard, Camus, Prieur (of the Marne), Camille Desmoulins, Barère, Quinette, Cambacérès, Jean de Bry, &c., were nominated. (*Moniteur*, No. 86.)

The meetings of this committee were chiefly employed at first in personal explanations between Guadet

and Danton, Robespierre and Buzot; public affairs suffered. It was a congress of individual passions. The passion for the Republic was absent, and was replaced by dictatorial ambition. A few days after Danton ascended the tribune of the Convention. He commenced by complaining that the revolutionary tribune was without authority, and he announced that the people were ready to rise *en masse*. "They ought and they must!" he exclaimed. Afterwards he decreed that pikes be manufactured at the expense of the nation to arm every citizen, and that the counter-revolutionists and aristocrats should be placed outside the law. "We must kill our domestic enemies to triumph over our foreign enemies." Thus, after having obstructed the deliberations of the Committee of General Defence, by their eternal disputes, these people came with speeches prepared to sound the alarm in the departments, to incite the people of Paris to insurrection, to decry the operations of the armies, to surround the Convention with suspicions and distrust of the people, to light up the fire of civil war instead of supplying the means of extinguishing it.

Robespierre in his turn proposed the expulsion of the members of the Capet family, and the trial of Marie Antoinette before the revolutionary tribunal. It would have been better for him to occupy himself with military measures to repair the disasters in Belgium, and to prevent the progress of the counter-revolutionists of the west.

Danton and Dumouriez.

The divisions which had so long occupied the old Committee of General Defence, and filled all the

meetings of the new, was not long in breaking out in the Convention. Exasperated by the events in Belgium, the friends of the fatherland did not see Danton eternally applauding Dumouriez without grave suspicions, promising to bring him before the Assembly if he betrayed us, but obstinately opposing the reading of a famous letter written by Dumouriez to the Convention, dated the 12th of March. Had this letter been read, we could have foreseen a part of the evils this royalist general occasioned us. Danton's plan was, in fact, to provoke a tumultuous movement in Paris, at any price, to strike the Convention, and dissolve it completely or partly; his purpose was to furnish Dumouriez with the pretext of directing his army on Paris by preceding him with a proclamation in the departments, and the necessity of repairing the evil caused by the violation of the national representation.

Such a system was the more perfidious because the three orators of this party always spoke of the coalition of the Right with Dumouriez.

However, this general was acting for Orleans; Orleans was the deputy of the electoral body of Robespierre; Orleans was no stranger to Danton's intrigues, and still less to those of Marat. On the other side there were reports of intimate correspondence between Dumouriez and Gensonné. All this made me reflect, and I could not help distrusting all the leaders of the two opposing parties.

I perceived very clearly that Dumouriez was a traitor or a royalist, an ambitious man who required a party, and who had made sure of Danton.

In the sitting of the 1st of April (*Moniteur*, No. 91),

Danton, who was asked in the Assembly to give an account of the operations of the representatives of the people in Belgium, demanded that a preliminary report be made. "For," said he, "many persons must be heard, many leaders must be interrogated, we shall see if we have given this famous letter, which has been read everywhere except in this place, the consequences which we would have been able to give it as soon as it has been known to us. Others will see that if we had not in this circumstance acted with the prudence that the events dictated, the army, deprived of this leader, would have been hurled back on our frontier, in such disorder that our enemies would have entered our fortresses along with our own soldiers."

Lasource accused him afterwards of being an accomplice of Dumouriez, whose plan was to enter France whilst Danton was causing an insurrection in Paris and making a part of the Convention unpopular. Danton replied with that terrible talent of revolutionary imbroglio of which he possessed so much, and the Assembly, in the midst of such intrigues and doubt, passed to the order of the day. The most certain results of such manœuvres was the reviling of the Committees of Public Safety and of General Defence by Marat and Robespierre. This was the vessel's last anchor: they wished to break it to become its masters. On the 1st of April Marat repeated from the tribune that the committee was almost entirely composed of factionary statesmen. "We know," said he, "that the patriots formed the minority, and that the statesmen make the decrees which you have adopted without discussion." The Convention disdained the demands of Marat; but presently Robes-

pierre attacked the committee more strenuously. It was the rock on which all the tempests struck. It is true that at this time it showed some energy; for after the Dumouriez treason the meetings over which I presided were permanent, night and day, and we had the courage to deliberate and execute many arrests even against such deputies as Orleans, Sillery, and others. In this imminent danger all parties came together in the great hall of the Tuileries to deliberate and save the Republic. Cambacérès made the report which declared Dumouriez a traitor and outlaw to his country, and which put a price on his head. The constituted authorities were ordered to the bar to answer for the security and tranquillity of Paris. At last the Convention declared itself permanent.

6th of April, 1793—The Creation of the First Committee of Public Safety after a Report of Five Commissioners of which I was one.

After Dumouriez' treason, our misfortune was at its height. A new committee had promptly to be organised to give activity to the executive council, to have the energy to command and the courage to defend the threatened Republic. After many fruitless debates, the Convention, on my proposal, charged five commissioners to draw up a bill for the organisation of the Committee of Public Safety. These commissioners were Isnard, Thuriot, Danton, Mathieu, and myself.

Isnard presented the bill on the evening of the meeting of the 6th of April. Buzot thought it dangerous; Thuriot defended it. They demanded that the discussion cease. I opposed it in the following terms:

"The question is to take a great measure of public safety and not to organise tyranny. We must enlighten the doubts of some members; it is from the frankness of our opinions that confidence will spring. Therefore I demand that the discussion be continued."

It was continued, and the bill presented by Isnard was adopted. Thus, in the midst of public misfortune, a committee destined to end it was created. It was composed of nine members, as if they wished to banish from the citizens every idea of a decemvirate. It deliberated in secret; it was to watch over and move the executive power; it could, in urgent cases, take measures of general defence at home and abroad; its decrees had to be signed by a majority of its members, which could not be less than two-thirds; it could not issue a warrant except against the executive agents; it had to render a weekly account of the state of the Republic.

This committee had powers for a month only, and the national treasury was independent of it. The commissaries of the Convention in the armies had to maintain a daily correspondence with it, besides their correspondence with the Convention. What brilliant glory was reserved for this committee, if it could always have been composed of pure men, of energetic patriots, of citizens who would love the Republic and not a party, preferring the public welfare to their personal ambition, and respecting the national character—just, humane and free—instead of blighting it by cruel thoughts and tyrannous acts! Twenty times, in writing this account to my fellow-citizens, I felt my hand refuse to wield the pen, because I was in the presence of public ingratitude. But the innocence and

purity of my heart have given me a fresh impulse; and I have undertaken, in the recollection of these events, to describe in the second part the energy which animated me in the days of the 31st of May, the 1st and 2nd of June, when my impotent voice was thundering alone in the tribune against the popular tyranny with which some ruffians had covered themselves.

My Nomination to the First Committee of Public Safety on the 6th of April (Evening meeting).

I was nominated a member of the Committee of Public Safety with the unanimous consent of all. My colleagues and I were all elected at the same meeting by name, and in the following order: Barère, Delmas, Bréard, Cambon, Jean de Bry, Danton, Guyton-Morveau, Treilhard, Lacroix. (*Moniteur*, No. 98.)

As it is in the operations of the Committee of Public Safety that my accusers have taken the odious accusation of tyranny with which they have filled all mouths with calumny, the first thing I must show my fellow-citizens is the declaration of the principles with which I entered the committee of government.

This declaration is not meant to be a defence of an accused person; it dates from the birth of the committee; it has as witnesses all the members of National Convention; it has been applauded by them; it is in the newspapers of the time; it is as a profession of faith, which I place at the door of the Temple to serve me as a guarantee and a shield.

The Statement of my Principles on the Creation of the Committee of Public Safety. (Meeting of the 5th of April, 1793, at the Convention.)

"I have vowed an implacable hatred to every kind of tyranny. I would not come to this tribune to defend measures which could only tend to a dictatorship; but it suffices to hear us with good faith, and not give new imaginary troubles, for being able to agree on the organisation of a good Committee of Public Safety. Your last organisation (of general defence) cannot effect the salvation of the country: it is composed of too many members — twenty-five. It hesitates, is embarrassed and paralysed by its deliberating mania and the number of its deliberators. This committee was public; secrecy is the soul of the affairs of the government. The publicity of our measures suits our enemies; the conspirators know our projects and means of defence before they are decreed. The committee has always in its place of meeting nearly two hundred members of the Convention. The deliberations are continued without order, and, like the Athenians when Philip was at their gate, we deliberate much and do little. It is a club, or another National Assembly. It is no longer the object of your institution; it is no longer an active committee taking prompt measures of general security. This committee, such as it is, has been a series of transactions between the parties loudly expressed. You have formed the congress of passion; we must make one of intelligence. This committee, by its vicious organisation, its composition of incompatible elements, by its dangerous publicity, by its too slow deliberation, can only shackle

the Republic and leave it to perish. One would think, on hearing the eternal objections of these timorous politicians who oppose the formation of a new committee, that the question was to constitute a body, or a new special authority or national council. Yet the question was on a committee of the Convention, to confirm or improve what already existed, and to make it a useful instrument of public defence.

"In all times men have felt the necessity of having momentarily, in times of revolution and conspiracies against their country, the necessity of dictatorial authorities and consular power, that public liberty may not suffer. I do not wish to propose such authorities: they do not suit free people, and still less at a time when ambitious scoundrels can abuse all and lead the people astray. I will observe that at Rome the people disputed with the senate all branches of the legislative power, because they were jealous of their freedom; but they never disputed about the executive power, because they were jealous of their glory and security.

"Now it is not proposed to transfer or delegate to the Committee of Public Safety any branch of the legislative power. What can you fear from a committee that is always responsible to the National Convention, always watched over by all its members, making no kind of law, only making the executive council use vigilance, hastening the action of the administration of the interior, and suspending the arrests taken by the ministers by denouncing them immediately to the Convention? What have you to fear from a Committee of Public Safety of which the national treasury is entirely independent, and which cannot act on civil liberty, but

only on the public agents who could be suspected or implicated in any conspiracy? What can you fear from a committee established for a month, and ruled in all its course by the register and signature of its deliberators? What can you fear from a committee on which all eyes are turned, all hopes re-united, all distrusts agglomerated?

"Citizens! shall we ever surround ourselves with terrors and chimeras? Fear of tyranny leads in its train tyranny itself. Let us look at our enemies and combat them. Our greatest enemies are calumniators and proofless denunciators. Doubtless in the treasons which surround us, in the anti-national crimes that afflict us, distrust is excusable, but carried to excess it becomes an arm in favour of our public enemies.

"If you wish to have a good Committee of Public Safety, choose honestly those whom you think honest and capable, and after their election, have confidence in them, support them with your opinion, defend them against the habitual calumniators who are the bitterest enemies of the Convention and the real conspirators that serve Dumouriez. Public opinion has brought about the Revolution, public opinion alone can give the Executive Council and the Committee of Public Safety the essential power and energy. Let this committee only look after the ministers, only deliberate on measures of public safety. Support discouraged ministers by public opinion too, overwhelmed as they are by fear of responsibility and with a very heavy burden in the revolutionary crises in which we still exist, even when we think ourselves within sight of the harbour. But at the same time keep a sharp eye on every public official, on whom rests the safety of all.

"People are always talking of a dictatorship! I only know of one that is at the same time legitimate, necessary, and desired by the nation: that is the National Convention.

"It is for you that the nation exercises a dictatorship over herself. And I firmly believe that is the only dictatorship free and enlightened men can put up with.

"You are frightened by the shadow of a dictatorship whilst you have confided to the Committee of Surveillance the terrible power of issuing warrants and imprisoning citizens at their pleasure, because of treachery and conspiracy.

"Big revolutionary children cry out against dictatorship, while they themselves hastened to nominate the commissioners who were sent into the departments with the tremendous power of transporting the enemies of liberty and equality.

"You speak of dictatorship! Do not omit to speak, then, of the most terrible dictatorship in its effects on the Revolution and its rapid progress—the dictatorship of slander.[1]

"Spreading all over society and every bench of the Convention, it is this dictatorship that pours out its poison broadcast and thus becomes the most dangerous ally of the coalition against us. That is the dictatorship that I denounce, and that will crush every one in turn unless prevented."

[1] This frightful dictatorship was exercised by two men who did great harm to their country—Marat and Fréron. The latter invoked the spirit of Marat in the first number of his paper, which started in Vendémiaire; he was indeed worthy to serve such a master. The future will tell us what powerful men these two base varlets served!

After a few general remarks I go on with my speech thus :—

"A committee with no power over civil liberty, deliberating without publicity, without effect on the finance, without power independent of the National Assembly, exercising a simple surveillance, deliberating in urgent cases on measures of public safety, of which it gives the Convention an account, hastening the action of the executive council, denouncing the public agents either suspected or faithless to the Assembly, and suspending provisionally the decrees of the executive council when they seem contrary to the common good, charged with rendering an account daily to the National Convention. . . . . But, finally, I ought to declare that I regard those who devote themselves to the works of this committee under the terrible circumstances in which we are placed as new Curtii, devoting themselves to their country, for with the passions that disturb us, with the hideous distrusts which beset us, with the malevolent genius which has been pursuing us for a long time, it is impossible to engage in public affairs without renewing one's courage daily, and without sacrificing one's existence."

Such are the principles which I had the honour of announcing to the Convention when it was necessary to create the Committee of Public Safety ; such are the grounds on which the Convention ordered the bill to be presented. Say, then, if the author of this speech, and of this plan of a committee, could ever have been the partisan or accomplice of tyranny. From this time forward I buried myself in the Committee of Public Safety with my colleagues, to organise a sort of government or surveillance on all parts of the Republic.

I never appeared at the Assembly, which was always occupied by the vociferations of Marat, by the denunciatory speeches of Robespierre against Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, and Gensonné, by the violent extempore speeches of Danton, and by the eloquent replies of Vergniaud and Guadet. The meeting of the 13th was devoted to the nominal appeal on the accusation of Marat, after a report of the Committee of Legislation.

I was at the committee occupied with the immensity of its works and its organisation. I did not vote on this nominal appeal; but as I had never feared to express my opinions, I declare that although my sentiments inclined me since the Constituent Assembly to have a horror of this man, that those sentiments increased as I beheld him more closely by reading his proscriptions and hearing his sanguinary motions, yet through respect for the principle of the inviolability of national representation, for the opinions of its members, I would have voted "No."

This epoch has started, in the opinion of all political observers, great evils for France, has broken the principle of popular representation, has made the breach in the legislative body through which the enemies of the Republic entered, disguised as Communist patriots, as Jacobin patriots, as Cordelier patriots, as Robespierrian patriots, and all those who in their turn have decimated the National Convention.

Marat's accusation awakened hatred, and gave it such activity in Paris that, on the 15th of March, the commissaries, who called themselves representatives of the majority of the sections of Paris, came to demand the dismissal of twenty-two members of the Convention. But let us turn our eyes from this usurpation of the rights of the people.

April 15th—New Declaration of Rights.

On that day, at least, the meeting was devoted to the discussion of the Declaration of Rights, which had just been outraged by incendiary liberticide petitions, written apparently by the same hands which had drawn up that abominable address of the citizens of Marseilles which I opposed and overcame in the meeting of the 21st of March. I explained from the tribune, on April 15th, 17th, and following days, the plan of a constitution, which we presented, and of which several articles were decreed. The priority of the Declaration of Rights of 1791 was discussed. Here is my answer:

"The old Declaration of Rights has the merit of being very concise; but it has also the fault of being very incoherent. We had only completed the revolution of freedom, we afterwards made the revolution of equality, which we found under the *débris* of the throne. If, then, it be true that we have made progress in freedom, if it be true that we have made new discoveries in the rights of man, you must consecrate them by your new declaration. The project presented by the Constitutional Committee upholds coherent principles, the distinction of natural rights, political and civil, and their necessary development for the French people, at the moment when we are going to occupy ourselves with the constitution. I wish to believe that the time of storms is past, that our exhausted passions will not have strength enough to obstruct our march, and that we shall have no more ambition of speech, but that we shall always have the ambition of being useful.

"I have always used every favourable opportunity for moderating embittered passions, reconciling parties, and rallying them to the common good. Each side of the Assembly calls me 'feeble,' 'moderate,' but these names, bestowed by exaggerated passion, are of very little importance if my efforts should produce any good or effect a truce in the rending of the National Assembly. In those meetings I defended the liberty of the press and the liberty of worship, without which a free people enjoy neither liberty nor repose. In the meetings of the 15th, 17th, and 19th of April I only acted as reporter of the Constitutional Committee. I had to inform the Convention of the first steps taken by the Committee of Public Safety in its political career. Our attention was first directed to our unhappy colleagues, betrayed by Dumouriez to the House of Austria, as well as the Minister of War, Beurnonville, and his aide-de-camp."

The 16th of April—Statement of the first labours of the Committee of Public Safety—Manifesto of the Convention regarding the violation of the Right of Nations by Austria in detaining the four representatives of the people, the commissioners sent by the Convention to Dumouriez, as well as the Minister of War, Beurnonville.

Is he then an enemy of national representation whose labours at the Committee of Public Safety have been employed in demanding, before Europe, justice against this violent outrage of the Right of Nations? I will submit to my first natural judges the report which I made in the meeting of the 16th of April, and the manifesto by which it was followed.

"The Committee of Public Safety, after having organised its bureaux, in which there are numberless details and departments relating to the general defence and to diplomacy, reviewed the political, military, naval, colonial, and administrative state, and the safety of the Republic; it perceived the grandeur of its mission and the difficulties attached to it. To form a plan of defence by land and sea, to scrutinise political opinions and the military conduct of the chiefs of the army, to revise the composition of the different staffs, to watch over the defence of the frontiers, to increase the cavalry, to revise the works in the ports, to encourage the enlistment of sailors, to collect and manufacture arms for the numerous defenders of liberty, to follow and regulate the new march of the armies, to guard their supplies, to hasten political administration, to watch and assist the action of the executive council, to extinguish by firm and speedy measures the torches of civil war: those are the objects with which it was first occupied.

"Civil war! At this word the despots of Europe smile with hope. They see in it the political coal for the burning of the Republic. It is to our internal divisions that all the combinations of our enemies are attached; their strongest auxiliaries are the guilty hopes of insurrection produced in some maritime departments.

"On the banks of the Loire they have placed a part of their abominable conspiracy. But all the means of suppressing this execrable conspiracy against the peace of the country are in your hands; the means are in your power: they are the cessation of our divisions, the eradication of passion and personal

revenge, constitutional work, public education, finance, and general defence.

"By a unanimous decree you established, three days ago, the solid basis of a European peace. You declared with the energy of a republican nation that you will never permit any government to influence yours, or to interfere with the constitution you wish to give France; and at the same time you have declared that you will not interfere with the form of other governments, in punishing with death the man who should propose any mediation, any negotiation which would not have as a preliminary the recognition of the sovereignty of the people of the French Republic, one and indivisible. If diplomatic Europe, weary of useless expense and exhausted by the guilty war which it has had the impudence to wage against the French, wishes to be wise, it will see that the empire of reason is the appanage of free men, and that war only produces misery.

"Look at the spirit which has dictated the strange communications of Coburg: it pretends that France ought to be tranquil, and that Europe should not be disturbed. Who has disturbed Europe if it be not the impious coalition of tyrants? What has given the idea of propagating principles destructive of despotism, if it be not its own excess? Kings fear with reason this overflow of liberty, which will submerge their thrones if they be not prudent, and if they wish to destroy its course in the French Republic.

"At this moment your committee is occupying you with the fate of your colleagues who have been betrayed to Austrian tyranny.[1] Your commissioners suffer for

[1] These representatives of the people are Cannes, Quinette, Lamarque, and Bancal, together with Beurnonville, the Minister

liberty, but we cannot dissimulate that this infamous act was a violation of the right which all civilised nations have always respected.

"Let us distinguish the right of war, frightful as it is, let us distinguish it from this violence of savages, which belongs to no code and to no century; let us make the cry of the National Convention heard by all men: that France denounces in kings a violation which threatens their heads also, and that the governments at last learn that it is a justice that the most atrocious despotism must respect.

"We stipulate here, not for our commissioners alone and for France, but for the human race. I am going to submit to the Convention a manifesto which the Committee had asked Condorcet to produce. You have often applauded the philosophy and knowledge of that deputy; the committee adopted his work with some additions; this language is worthy of free men and of a great nation."

"Beware!" said the manifesto to all governments, "the outrage committed on the representatives of a great nation outrages the first of laws, effaces the tradition of respect which civilised people have agreed to observe, and only leaves the terrible right previously left to savage hordes—the right of pursuing its enemies as wild beasts. . . . People of all governments, it is under the safeguard of your generosity and of your most sacred rights that the French nation puts its representatives whom treason has delivered up to tyranny; it is more to your interest than ours that they should be immediately liberated—you will

of War and his aide-de-camp. They are the same that the Committee of Public Safety has just decreed should be exchanged for the daughter of Louis Capet.

be partakers in the disgrace of a crime that you have permitted, and your weakness will show tyrants the extent to which they can go."

This report and this manifesto were adopted, applauded, and then translated, and sent to every government in Europe.

But was the language of the House of Austria ever that of loyalty and justice? It is disgraced by keeping this shameful depôt, and the humiliations to which the representatives of the people were exposed whilst in the custody of the Emperor are well known. I was the first to protest against this violation, I was the first to defend national representations, and they now try to show I was its opponent.

Commission of the Twelve.

On the 21st of May twelve members were proclaimed. The Right had the imprudence to name all from among themselves, and thus form a party tool out of this useful institution. The deputies who composed this commission were good citizens, animated by pure patriotism, and many endowed with great energy.[1] But they forgot that the men whom they directly attacked were immensely popular, and that public power was not in the hands of the committee, not even in the Convention, but with those whom the commission designated in the first mandates it issued.

Whilst the Commission of the Twelve was in formation new troubles disturbed the Assembly. The

[1] Fonfréde, Rabaud Ste. Etienne, Kervelégan, Saint Martin, Vigée, Gomaire, Bertrand, Boileau, Mollevaux, Henri Larivière, Gardien, Bergoeing.

galleries, full of paid agitators, insulted the Convention. They spoke for some time on the basis of the constitution; the project was slowly discussed. A series of questions were proposed, but when taking the order of work, fresh seeds of discord were scattered in the Assembly. It was no longer the temple of the laws but an arena of gladiators, whom the disturbers, interspersed amongst the galleries, seemed to excite against one another. It was decided to distribute tickets to the sections, that the same scandals might not occur. The debates on this proposition were very stormy. I continued that day to attract the hatred of all sides of the Assembly; and I did so because I never loved the spirit of party, and I always abhorred faction. If I wished, I could have played a *rôle* at the head of one of the belligerent parties, instead of being a deliberator.

I could have assured myself of ardent defenders, and I should not this day be writing these truthful books in a sad prison, had I wished to prostitute my thoughts and my pen to the support of one side of the Assembly against the other. But, in my eyes, they were all my colleagues; they were all, like me, representatives of a people. I would regard it as baseness or pusillanimity to aid the oppressors of either side. I was called feeble, even a waverer. I was treated as a moderate because I tried to do good without enrolling myself under a banner, and I wished to defend the cause of the people and the Republic without walking under the bloody banners of "The Friend of the People," nor under the periodic banner of the "Patriot." Frenchman I am, solitary, isolated, without defenders or refuge, because I liked neither Brissot nor Marat, because I

served neither Guadet nor Danton; and I feared equally the bitterness of the zeal of Buzot, and the atrocity of the tyranny of Robespierre.

10th of July, 1793—Denunciation of the members of the First Committee of Public Safety, and Demand for its renewal by nominal appeal.

An instant after Saint-Just's report, I beheld a new day shine upon me. A hope flattered my heart. It was that of leaving the Committee of Public Safety, and ceasing my difficult and dangerous functions, in which there was nothing but work after work, and ingratitude and accusation after labour. It was said for the past fortnight, on the benches and at private meetings, that the Committee of Public Safety was not in step with the Revolution. Danton's friends repeated that we were not up to the level of our principles. Robespierre, proud of the approbationary addresses of the 31st of May, and backed up in this attempt by public opinion which he himself dictated, haughtily asserted that the Committee of Public Safety alone improved that of the 31st of May, and that its members should be incessantly renewed.

Camille Desmoulins had opened the trench by an article published against the members of the committee (Brissot had acted similarly in an article published six days before the 31st of May).[1] Camille did not

[1] Brissot attacked Delmas, Guyton, Cambon, Lindet and myself in the most slanderous and atrocious fashion. This was the signal for the attacks against us leading up to the events of the 31st of May; and it was only these members of the Committee who stood up for Brissot and his friends in their defence of national representation.

pardon us for having repulsed his solicitations to give the command of the army of the North to Arthur Dillon. All was disposed for the meeting of the 10th of July.

"If some members of the Committee of Public Safety have not gained the confidence of the patriots," said Drouet, "the majority has not ceased to deserve it. I ask that they be reduced to nine members, and that they be renewed by nomination."

"One cannot ignore," adds Camille Desmoulins, "that it is under the reign of this committee that most humiliating disasters fell upon the Republic. Seventy cannons have been captured from us in the Vendée, we have lost fifty-two cannons, and the camp of Famars has been occupied by the Austrians. I ask you if these events do not presuppose a complication of treasons, for which I do not accuse the intentions of the committee, but which its incapacity has not been able to prevent. I conclude that the renewal of the committee is necessary, demanding that it should be no longer an upper chamber, exercising royal functions. The ignorance of the committee has done us much injury."

They dared not reproach us for our opinion on the 31st of May, and on its atrocious authors, but they blamed us for incapacity, royalty, and the allurements of an upper chamber. They seemed to blame us for the defeat of our troops in the Vendée, though Camille knew the Parisians to whom we were indebted for it. We are blamed for the loss of the camp of Famars and of fifty-two cannons; still Camille knew in whom General Custine was interested, who permitted the army of the North to be surprised. Bad

plans of campaign are imputed to us; yet at this time Camille knew that this was the business of the Minister of War and his assistants. A bad choice of staffs was also imputed to us; but Delmas and Lacroix, who were charged with it, only examined the registers of the ministry of war with their good or bad records on the different superior officers. The Minister of War and his assistant made the promotions; the committee signed them. Thus the calumnies of Desmoulins were refuted at this meeting.

The 10th of July—My second nomination to the Committee of Public Safety renewed by nomination.

The same evening the Convention decreed an extraordinary meeting for the nomination of the new members of the Committee of Public Safety. The following were nominated: Jean Bon Saint-André, Barère, Gasparin, Couthon, Thuriot, Saint-Just, Prieur (of the Marne), Hérault de Séchelles, and Robert Lindet.

The 11th of July, 1793—The Committee gives an account of all its operations to the Convention, which approves of them.

On the following day Cambon gave an account to the Convention, in the name of the old Committee of Public Safety, of its operations and of the state of the Republic during the crisis which the events of the 31st of May had suddenly brought on. He spoke of the state of the departments divided by party. He disclosed the measures the committee had taken to baffle a new royalist conspiracy, plotted in Paris, and in which Dillon was implicated.

"As to the expenditure of the public funds," said the reporter of the committee, in conclusion, "you have forbidden your Committee of Public Safety to interfere with it. It defies anyone to accuse it of the dissipation of a single penny. It has always sent the examination of the objects of expense to the Committee of Finance. Our colleagues of this committee will tell you that they have reproached us for not taking enough. You have placed at our disposal one hundred thousand pounds per month for secret expenses. . . . . We restricted ourselves to strictly necessary expense—for a correspondence of eighty letters daily, and to the payment of the clerks employed at this work, in which there have been already eight hundred arrests or liberations. But of ourselves we have ordered nothing. The Committee of Overseers have examined these expenses, like all others of the same kind.

"As to the secret expenditures, it was proposed in your committee to make, like Roland, bureaux of public opinion, and spend money on writings,[1] newspapers, and reporters. We always refused. And our whole account consists in telling you that we have not touched a penny of the three hundred pounds which we had at our disposal by your decree.

"We will conclude by proposing that you approve of the arrests which we have decreed, on account of the gravity and urgency of circumstances, and which,

[1] Danton was always proposing that we should publish a patriotic journal, to be edited by Camille Desmoulins, but the Committee did not wish to influence public opinion. One day at the end of June, Camille Desmoulins asked us for thirty or forty thousand francs to found a paper. The Committee refused the sum, as it had before.

being, so to say, arbitrary acts, can no longer subsist without being confirmed by you."

The Convention ordered the printing of the report, and approved of all the operations of the first Committee of Public Safety.

My functions in the Second Committee of Public Safety.

"Let those who have served their country well, present themselves without fear at the tribunal of public opinion: those only should tremble who have served it badly." I confidently repeat those words of Henry Larivière at the meeting of the 17th of Thermidor, in the year III.

Here a new responsibility begins for me, and a greater obligation of work with the new members of the Committee of Public Safety. Robert Lindet alone was re-elected with me. A party of agitators and defenders of the 31st of May became members of the committee by the renewal of the 10th of July. Jean Bon Saint-André, Gasparin, Prieur (of the Marne), Couthon, Thuriot, Saint-Just, and Hérault—all attached to the events of the 2nd of June—formed almost the whole of the committee.[1] I was isolated in the midst of these political opinions, and yet I was the usual reporter of the committee. Alone I opposed the violation of national representation on the 2nd of June. I was the author of the report of the 6th of June, which informed France of this violation, and yet I was chosen to present the resolutions of the committee in the tribune.

You who are so brave when dangers are passed,

[1] Lindet was away, he was extinguishing the flames of civil war in the Eure and Calvados.

who cry so loudly against tyranny when others have beaten the tyrant, say, if placed like me in the committee with men of different opinions (not regarding the Republic and liberty, but only on the events of the 31st of May), tell me if you would have resumed the difficult and dangerous duties of a member of the Committee of Public Safety, in the midst of the general storm of opinions, and of the bitter feeling of the universal opposition of minds and hearts, and of the political chaos occasioned by every three or four dictators who combined to support everything except justice, and to authorise everything except what could reunite the citizens. Well, the man who, seeing only his wretched fatherland, has not hesitated to speak; the man who, seeing certain danger in speaking, has not been intimidated . . . . I am that man. I have, however, some pride in writing these justifying lines, as I experience some pleasure in thinking that the justice which ought to succeed them will not be forever absent from French hearts.

I enter the committee. What do I see? Couthon, proposing violent measures, which he calls vigorous, against the administration of the departments and against the fugitive deputies, or those still in the Assembly who hold the same opinion as the deputies proscribed on the 31st of May. Saint-Just always voted as an oracle, but his speeches were always for inflexible severity. He used to deliberate like a vizier. Hérault, naturally feeble, favoured the most vigorous opinions, because, being of the privileged class, he believed he would cause that fact to be forgotten, and by excessive measures he thought he would increase his patriotism. Jean Bon Saint-André was occupied with the navy, Gasparin with the war, I with diplomacy, Prieur (of the Marne)

regulated the works of the committee with a wise and veritable enthusiasm for liberty. Thuriot seemed the most prudent, and feared the too great tension given to the opinions and measures of the government and to those of the legislation.[1]

I went to the Assembly occasionally. What was happening there? Deputies denouncing deputies; the Left devouring the Right by denunciations, arrests, and by sealing the papers of the people's representatives. Men's minds commenced to become frightful, the progress of the Assembly was unequal, and carried to persecution by the dreadful energy of some orators such as Danton, Legendre, Lacroix, Bourdon of the Oise, Robespierre, etc.

Those who drew up petitions and extravagant addresses seemed to be the masters of the public mind, and carried the legislators to shocking severity. Unknown petitioners ran from all parts of the Republic to denounce the administrations, and to demand the prompt punishment of the leaders of federalism and of the troubles of the west and south of the Republic. Each day witnessed a fresh storm.

In this state of things what could I think of my re-election to the committee? I ought to act according to the wish of the Convention, and to believe (as it believed, or as it seemed to believe, and made the French people believe) that it approved of the events of the 31st of May, and accepted their consequences to conform to the general opinion of the nation. I ought to sacrifice my own opinion to that of the

[1] So after some months, Thuriot gave in his resignation as he was always at variance with St. Just and Robespierre, on the violent measures the latter were always plotting and carrying out.

Convention, and renounce my private reason in order to obey public reason or the legislature, which is its organ. To place me on the Committee of Public Safety, on the 10th of July, 1793, was it not to give me an order to serve my fatherland in the place designed for me, and in the public spirit which animated it?

What could I have done otherwise? What could one man do? What could several do in these extraordinary circumstances? No; no human force could check this torrent of revolutionary madness and political persecution. I felt I ought to moderate passions when I could speak to them, or temper measures when I could propose them; I felt that my language and opinions could only destroy me or make me suspected. I confined myself to do as much obscure work as possible, to acquire the moral esteem of my colleagues of the committee, if I could not aspire to their political confidence, and to save a few honourable and honest administrators from the mass of proscriptions which the Mahomets and their murderers had made the order of the day.

The first report made in the name of the Committee of Public Safety was in the meeting of Thursday evening, the 11th of July, the day after the nomination of its members. Couthon was the reporter of the affair at Lyons. He denounced Biroteau for having held a departmental congress in that city, not recognising the Convention, and Chassey as going there to fan the flame of civil war. He declared Biroteau a traitor to the fatherland, as well as the members of this Lyons Assembly; he decreed the arrest of Chassey.

The most violent projects were proposed. Le-

gendre wished to cut off all communication between Lyons and Paris, and to march thither with troops, and if Lyons did not submit within a fortnight, to liberate all the debtors of this great commercial city. He offered to be the bearer of this liberating decree, Mallarmé proposes the arrest of three members of the deputation of the Rhône and Loire. Lacroix said the Convention ought to confiscate, for the profit of the Republic, the property of the members of the departmental congress, and to distribute it to the *sans-culottes* who had taken up arms against them. This is the commencement of the war of the poor against the rich, and of those agrarian laws of odious confiscation exercised by Lacroix, one of the Omars attached to the car of the revolutionists-in-chief of the 31st of May. We shall presently see its frightful effects.

Robespierre is nominated a Member of the Committee of Public Safety in the place of Gasparin, who resigned.

On the 27th of July the committee introduced Robespierre into its bosom: a fatal step for France and for me! Why, abjuring all civic devotion, did I not rise above human considerations and abdicate the functions of a member of the committee, and return, after my resignation, amongst the peaceful members deliberating without danger or responsibility, to the bosom of the National Convention? Ah! if I did not do so, and it would have been a cowardly withdrawal, I at least cannot be charged with having introduced this tyrant into the government of my country. Although present at the deliberations of the committee, and at the artificial speeches of Couthon, although constant reporter of the committee, and though engaged that

day to make a long report on the reorganisation of the ministry and of the bureaux of war, I did not engage to report on Gasparin's successor. He was one of my colleagues, whose patriotism I esteem, and who saw no better than I did the dangers which the cruel and tyrannical spirit of Robespierre could make France undergo. Open the *Moniteur* and you will read there what followed in the account given of the meeting of the Convention.

Jean Bon Saint-André, addressing the Assembly, said: "The ill health of our colleague Gasparin obliges him to withdraw from the Committee of Public Safety. The work of the committee requires that it should be complete. I am charged to propose the replacing of Gasparin by Robespierre senior." The proposal was adopted.

Was there on that day a sort of sorrowful presentiment in the minds of the Assembly and the galleries? It is certain that there was no sign of approbation nor of joy, although Robespierre's name was then applauded, by a kind of custom or popular servitude.

Here I beg my constituents to follow the rapid and ambitious course of some members of the committee, and of those who apparently sustained it, or proposed to the Convention the means of making a colossal power in the committee. Robespierre had only been two days in the committee, and the deliberations already manifest his presence.

The first decree presented by the committee to the Convention after the nomination of Robespierre tends to give more activity to the revolutionary tribunal. On the 30th of July, Prieur (of the Marne) speaks of

the conspiracies which threaten the fatherland by the coalition of the departments. He speaks of punishing the conspirators severely, "at the moment," said he, "at which the acceptation of the constitution may revive new plots in the departments. The revolutionary tribunal will be overcharged, and during this time the conspirators will conceive a hope of escaping the vengeance of the law. To hasten its course I propose in the name of the Convention to establish a second section of the revolutionary tribunal, with the same number of judges as the first, the judges and juries being able to be replaced mutually in the two sections, and being named next day by the Convention."

The following day, Jean Bon Saint-André proposes in the name of the committee to double the number of judges only, that the tribunal may be divided into two sections in urgent cases. Then Legendre, who has since declaimed so much against the immense authority of the Committee of Public Safety, and who was one of the most ardent in conferring on it every sort of power, demands that the list of candidates, as judges of the revolutionary tribunal, be made by the Committee of Public Safety. "Let those," said Legendre replying to the members who opposed it, "who conceal themselves when justice pursues their accomplices, not come to day to place men on the tribunal as criminal as those they would judge." However, the Assembly maintained its dignity and its right by passing to the order of the day on this proposition of Legendre.

It was Robespierre who occupied the Committee with a long procedure relative to the divisions which occurred at Lille between General la Marlière, whom

Robespierre accused of complicity with Custine, and Lavalette, who was opposed to the orders of La Marlière, and whom the representatives of the people thought should be arrested.

Robespierre openly took the part of Lavalette. He called aristocrats and anti-revolutionists the members of the committee who wished for a thorough examination of this affair, and the authorities who, at the demand of Lesage Sénaux, had arrested La Marlière and Lavalette.

At last Jean Bon Saint-André completed the report. He decreed that there was no charge against Lavalette, Dufresne and Calandini, and sent La Marlière before the revolutionary tribunal.

The 1st of August—Summary of Danton's projects before the 20th of August, projects since executed by him and his party.

For some time past Danton had been striving to create a provisional government, very extreme in its measures and violent in its means, envied for its power, and corrupt by its riches or prodigality, and very odious by the opinion that would be circulated that it was doing everything, and was the cause of all evils, and father of all misfortunes. When this provisional and colossal government had been consecrated by decrees, Danton undertook afterwards with his means, his followers, and his party, his system of *sans-culotterie*, his revolutionary armies, his revolutionary tribunal, his section leaders at twenty pence a day, his revolutionary committees *à la jacobite*, and his commissioners *à la cordelière*, his journalists, his paid claque,

and all that crowd of sectaries—he undertook to raise every tempest against the government and the Convention which would have created or tolerated it, and to break it or make it yield to his personal wish in the midst of the storms and dangers which would surround it. If this system of violence did not succeed in destroying the government and the governing party, then, changing his system and opposing calmness to the tempest, Danton proposed to cry down the energy of the government by passing rapidly from the system of terror to that of indulgence, and contrasting the clemency of Augustus with the cruelty of Nero.

This is but a rapid glance at the brutal political knavery of Danton, disguised under oratorical forms, calculated to inflame the fury of the people excessively, to excite the rage of the mob, to electrify the wisest men, and to revolutionise the most moderate. Such was the leader of the *sans-culottes* at the approach of the solemn epoch of the 10th of August.

Listen to his speech of the 1st of August, and if you are a politician or observer, you will perceive in it the germ of all the fatal projects, of all the extreme measures, of all the public violence, and of all the versatility which I have described. Danton speaks to an assembly already depressed by the sad news of Mayence and Valenciennes; he speaks with all the severe or extravagant motions in which the unusual zeal of the orators indulged. He wishes to increase the power and the resources of the Committee of Public Safety by making it an independent provisional government, with the disposal of the public treasure. Here are his own words, according to the *Moniteur*, No. 215:

"As the moment has arrived to be politic, I sup-

port these propositions the more. A republican people does not certainly make war on its enemies by corruption, assassination, and poison. The vessel of reason ought to have its rudder—a wise policy. We shall only succeed when the Convention, remembering that the establishment of the Committee of Public Safety is one of the conquests of liberty, gives this institution the energy and development it is capable of. It has, in fact, rendered abundant service to perfect this kind of government. Undoubtedly this Coburg who advances against our frontier renders the greatest service to the Republic. The same circumstances as last year are with us to-day; the same dangers menace us. . . . But the people are not worn out, since they have accepted the constitution. I judge by the sublime enthusiasm it has just produced. It has, by this acceptance, made an engagement to fling itself as a whole against its enemies? Ah! let us be terrible, let us make war like lions. Why should we not establish a provisional government to second the national energy with powerful measures. I declare I will not enter into any responsible committee. I will retain my opinions and the faculty of stimulating those who govern. That is the sign of a dictator! I counsel you, and I hope you will profit by it. We must adopt the same means as Pitt does, with the exception of crime. . . . If you had enlightened the departments two months ago, if you had spread abroad a faithful picture of our conduct, if the Minister of the Interior had shown himself great and firm, and had done for the Revolution what Roland had done against it, federalism and intrigue would not have caused such commotion in the departments. But

nothing is done. The government uses no political means.

"We must, then, till the constitution be in a working condition, and that it may be so, erect the Committee of Public Safety into a provisional government; and ministers must be only the chief agents of this committee of government. I daresay some will object that the members of the Convention ought not to be responsible. I have already said that you are responsible for liberty, and that when you save it, but only then, will you obtain the blessing of the people.

"The necessary funds for the political expenses which the perfidy of our enemies may occasion ought to be at the disposal of this committee. Reason may be served at less expense than perfidy. Finally, this committee can put in execution strong political measures before their publication.

"Let us take a first measure: it is to make a rigorous inventory of all the corn. We must assure Frenchmen that there will be no scarcity, especially in a year of plenty. After the harvest each commune must furnish its contingent of men, to be enrolled the more willingly as the time of campaign approaches. If a people wish to be free, the whole nation must march when liberty is threatened. Note that the Vendeans make war with more energy than we do: they make the indifferent march. Why have we, who consider future generations, not placed an immense number of citizens on the frontiers? In several departments the people have already demanded that the awakening tocsin be sounded; the people are more energetic than we are. Liberty always arises from below.

"I demand that the Convention form a provisional government out of its Committee of Public Safety; that the ministers be only the head clerks of this department; that fifty millions be put at the disposal of this government, which will account for it at the end of the session, but can employ it all in one day, if it consider it expedient.

"An immense prodigality for the sake of liberty is an investment put out at usury. Let us then be great and politic above all. We have in France a host of traitors to baffle and discover. A clever government will have a host of agents.

"I demand in the name of posterity that you adopt my proposals without delay, for if you hold not the reins of government with a firm hand, you will enfeeble many generations by the exhaustion of the population, and you will condemn them to slavery and misery.

"Afterwards you must pass a measure to take an inventory of all the crops. You will watch over the transports, that nothing may go out by the ports or frontiers; you will also make an inventory of the arms. To-day you will put one hundred millions at the disposal of the government for the manufacture of cannons, guns, and pikes. After the harvest you will take an additional force for the army in each commune; let nothing make us despair. You are free from intriguers—at least at present. You are no longer shackled in your course, no longer annoyed by faction. Our enemies can no longer boast, like Dumouriez, of being masters of a part of the Convention. Be great and worthy of the people, for if your weakness prevents you from saving them, they

will be saved without you, and the disgrace will be yours."

If ever language was that of an Athenian demagogue, Roman tribune, or factionist leader, it was that which Danton had just spoken. In spite of the great applause he had received, I did not fear to contradict the despotic and financial system he had sketched at the Convention for the organisation of the provisional government.

"I doubt," said I to Danton, "that in handing over to the Committee of Public Safety the disposal of the public money, the Convention will find many members who will wish to remain there. For my part, the day on which you charge us with the management of the public money I resign. The evil is in the concurrence of the two authorities. Let there no longer be an executive council; let the ministers be the agents for the execution of decrees. Leave us our organisation and give us no funds. I believe it would be dangerous to establish at this moment a completely new provisional government."

Danton saw that I made his great speech useless, and he tried to carry his proposal by making amendments, and by taxing my fears for liberty as pusillanimity. He replied that a public man should not fear calumny. "Last year, in the executive council, when I took on my own responsibility the means of moving the nation to the frontiers, I said to myself, 'I foresee that I shall be calumniated, but I do not care; let my name be tarnished, I will save liberty.' To-day the question is: Is it advantageous that the committee of government should have money, agents, etc., at its disposal? I demand that it should have at

its disposal fifty millions, with this amendment: that the funds shall remain in the national treasury, and shall be withdrawn from it only by order of the committee. Furthermore, I declare that I will never accept an appointment in the committee. I swear it by the liberty of my country."

Thuriot and Saint-André sent this proposition for examination to the committee.

The 14th of August, 1793—I nominate Carnot and Prieur members of the Committee of Public Safety.

At the meeting of the 14th of August, I believe I rendered France a signal service by calling to the Committee of Public Safety two honest, patriotic, intelligent, industrious men, without whom it would have been impossible for the Convention and the Committee to save France from the imminent and innumerable dangers which were threatening or overwhelming it. I refer to Carnot and Prieur (of the Côte d'Or). Carnot returned from a military mission in the Pas de Calais and the northern frontiers. Prieur left the castle of Caen, where he was detained by the orders of General Wimpfen. Both were as attached to the Republic as experienced in the military arts, which demand most talent, knowledge and industry; both were from the same department, bound by mutual friendship, and often manifested an intimate confidence in me.

It was I, seeing the Committee of Public Safety unprovided with men experienced in war, and without a member capable of tracing a plan of campaign or a system of strategy, who took steps and insisted on

two officers being our colleagues in the Committee of Public Safety.[1]

Robespierre represented them as moderates, as Girondins, and he seemed less astonished at the proposition when he learnt that it came from me. I insisted on the imperative necessity of the committee being assisted in military matters, especially at a time when we did not know how to raise the enormous number of men necessary to defend our extended frontiers, which were being attacked on all sides, and already invaded on the north, whilst they were more than threatened on the south. But I had as much trouble to make Carnot and Prieur accept their appointments as I had to make some members of the committee pass my proposal.

It is usual with true talent and genius to be modest, as it is usual with tyranny to remove men of genius and extinguish men of light. At last I went to the Convention, at the end of the meeting of the 14th of August, and I proposed to add Prieur and Carnot to the Committee of Public Safety. My motion was immediately adopted by the Convention.

Happy day on which the two deputies became part of the Committee of Public Safety! I acquired two friends, two men to whom I can at least attach myself with confidence; and the Republic was enriched with the military talents of Carnot, to whom we owe all our plans of campaign and military operations, our successes and the means of profiting by them; of

[1] Prieur and Carnot will bear witness to the efforts I made to induce them to enter the Committee. They feared, and rightly so, the herculean labours and enormous responsibility awaiting them, and they scrupled to associate with the shady and despotic men that the Convention had recently elected on the Committee.

Prieur, to whom we owe the improvised and abundant manufacture of cannons, guns, and arms of all sorts, of saltpetre, powder, and all the ingenious means employed in this war of liberty against despotism.

I know these truths will afflict more than one of the men who believe themselves the founders of the Republic because they have made motions or declamations in the Convention, or because they have made much fuss on their departmental missions. I know that this eulogium of Carnot will wound the jealous crowd of mediocrities, and the infernal league of the envious. But even if the calumny of their atrocious accusations again torture me; even if all the Frérons attach themselves, as the vulture of Prometheus, to tear out my heart in the name of the allied tyrants, because I have placed on the altar of our fatherland the sacred fire which, from the national tribune, I caused to pass into all the battalions of the Republic; even if the most unjust and terrible decrees strike a free and innocent head, I will repeat to all Frenchmen that without Carnot and Prieur, France would be partitioned amongst foreigners, her armies dissolved, the Republic a chimera, and to-day an absolute despotism would devour the miserable inhabitants of our enslaved soil. What would emanate from the conceptions of a committee without military men, without plans, arms, or powder, about to withstand a universal attack? The great national business was war; victories were the chief means to found the Republic. It would have been a time of disaster and blood, an epoch of misfortune and common cowardice, in which the approach of foreign troops would have been regarded almost as

a benefit, had we not been inspired and encouraged by the genius of imperishable liberty.

A greater number of citizens placed themselves in the army, as in an asylum, against the tyranny of Robespierre. The Committee of Public Safety, crushed by the popularity of Robespierre, and by what was called the public opinion of Paris, and of the popular societies in favour of this savage tribune, took refuge in the army to terrify the tyranny of the interior by the successes of the armies on the frontiers.

The Convention itself, though very powerful, only breathed freely from the triumviral oppression in the brief moments in which I came to the tribune to carry a beneficent law, or to announce some new triumph of the army. These triumphs, the fruits of the valour and courage of the Republicans, were none the less due to the genius of Carnot and the work of Prieur. The latter covered the frontiers with artillery, arms, and powder; whilst the former disposed the troops, directed the combats, and organised victory by his continual meditations.

Will it be believed? One single man, more advanced in the art of war than in military rank, one single man with his genius and his sincere love of liberty, in the silence of passions, even in the midst of a revolutionary torrent, directed the operations of fourteen armies, their organisation, their encampment, their marches, their combats; he even pointed out the moment they ought to fight, the place where they ought to conquer. He alone rebutted and destroyed the plans of the cabinets of Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Turin, and London.

Neither the Privy Council of Pitt, nor the daring

conceptions of Colonel Mack, the discretion of Coburg, the temerity of Brunswick, the experience of Clairfayt, the valour of Hohenlohe, nor the vaunted tactics of the Northern barbarians, were able to overcome the simple and audacious plans which Carnot conceived, and which the brave armies of the Republic executed, and of which I am only the historian.

Carnot and Prieur entered the Committee of Public Safety at the same disastrous moment; courage was then required to accept such duties.

The 16th of August.

The meeting of the 16th of August was distressing. A denunciation was given of the frequent desertions of soldiers and the abandonment of flags by volunteers at a moment when it was urgent to reinforce the armies already organised, and to form new ones still more numerous. Danton decreed death to every soldier or volunteer who left his flag without permission or without being replaced. At the same meeting a report from General Declaye was read on the treason at Cambrai, to deliver this place to the Austrians, who had invested it since the 7th of August; it mentioned the vigorous sallies made by the garrison on the enemy, in one of which a flag was taken from the English army.

The Convention was alarmed at the signs of perfidy of which Cambrai was the scene. Guyomard called the attention of the representatives to the system of manifest treason organised on this frontier. He asked that the committee should keep their eyes upon the inept or traitrous executive council, and should search for the authors of the conspiracies.

The Convention charged the Committee of Public Safety to make all necessary enquiries on the object of Guyomard's denunciations.

The 4th of September—The Revolutionary Army.

I have often had occasion to depict the frightful morale of the Dantons and Robespierres. It is of Danton we must again speak, when we examine the delirious creation of the revolutionary armies, one of the institutions *à la Robert* (the chief of the brigands). One must speak of Danton when one wishes to paint the savage anarchy which mixes its furies with the springs of patriotism; one must speak of Danton when one wishes to reproach someone for having introduced a swarm of brigands amongst the conquerors of the Republic; one must speak of Robespierre and Danton when one wishes to represent France devoured by the most sanguinary and disgusting despotism; one must condescend to pronounce their execrable names when one wishes to paint the genius of crime and calumny, demoralising the souls, digging tombs at the side of the prepared scaffolds, destroying all social ideas, overthrowing property, oppressing the representation of the people, and making a war on talent and genius, like the Visigoths. The first thing these Alarics, Gengis Khans, and Omars did was to organise revolutionary armies. But how to proceed to create them in an enlightened country, in a free land, which had fourteen armies truly revolutionary, since they sustained the revolution of liberty with such valour? How, then, to set about it? Factious crowds in the Place de Grève; tumultuous complaints as to the commissariat; violent petitions and numerous addresses, a deputation

of Jacobins, and committees of forty-eight sections; then a very brutal and a very disorganising speech, full of the eloquence of the day; then reports to forcibly carry out the measure that had been forcibly decreed; such were the Dantonian tactics which were employed on the 5th of September, 1793, a day of anarchic memory.

At eight o'clock p.m. the town-hall was filled with citizens who created alarm on the subject of the commissariat. They propose different measures; a deputation of Jacobins is present. Léonard Bourdon, their orator, announces that at the news of the anxiety of the people, the society has sent them to unite with the general council of the commune, to enlighten each other on the means of relieving the momentary famine. He asserts that the deputies of the Mountain will endeavour to get the Convention to pass on the following day the different measures which have been agreed upon by the people, in concert with the magistrates. The general council ordains that from five to eleven o'clock all the citizens will assemble at the Town Hall to go and demand from the Convention the formation of a revolutionary army; all workmen are invited to shut their workshops.

The 5th of September, 1793.

Origin of the Terror—Formation of the Revolutionary Armies—Arrests of Suspects—Purification of the Revolutionary Committees—Expulsion of the Military outside Paris.

Scarcely is the meeting of the Convention opened on the 5th of September, than a number of citizens come into the hall; the mayor and municipal officers are at the bar.

"The want of provisions which causes the disturb-

ance of the people," says Mayor Pache, "is occasioned by the fact that Paris is now supported but by daily arrivals, and that the laws on provisions are not put into execution. The malevolence and selfishness of the rich, in detaining the corn, is the cause of all. The people, weary of these manœuvres, come to manifest its wish to you."

Chaumette, in the name of the commune, speaks thus: "The citizens of Paris, tired of seeing their fate wavering so long in the balance, wish to fix it for ever. The tyrants of Europe and our enemies at home atrociously persist in their system of starving the people so as to conquer them and compel them to exchange their sovereignty for a morsel of bread, a thing that shall never be done. . . . . A greedy class has possession of the commodities of primary necessity; in place of striking it, you have only clamoured; it continues its robbery. You have made wise laws, but the executive force is wanting. The concealed enemies at home, with the word 'liberty' on their lips, stop the circulation of the means of subsistence. They close the granaries, and coldly calculate how much a famine, a riot, a massacre will produce for them. Every day we learn of new treasons, new conspiracies. . . . . No more quarter, no more mercy! ('No, no,' from all quarters of the hall.) If we do not anticipate them, they will anticipate us. Let us throw the barrier of eternity between them and ourselves. The people have shown patience enough; they are mocked. The day of justice and of wrath has arrived. An immense assembly of citizens demands food and force from the law; consequently we demand the formation of

the revolutionary army, which you have created, and which the intrigues and fear of the guilty have made abortive. Let this army form its nucleus in Paris immediately, and extend to all the departments, and be increased by all men who wish the Republic indivisible; let it be followed by an incorruptible and impressive tribunal and by a fatal instrument which cuts off with a single stroke conspiracies and conspirators;[1] let it be charged to compel avarice and cupidity to disgorge the riches of the earth; finally, let it be composed in such a manner as to leave in each city sufficient forces to rule the malevolent legislators. You have declared that France was in revolution until its independence was assured. This decree must not be made in vain. Hercules is ready to take his club into his robust hand again, and instantly the earth will be purged of all the thieves that infest it. The fatherland will breathe again, the subsistence of the people will be assured. We expect to see the aristocracy renew its objections to the revocation of the decree of death. There will be but one reply to this: the safety of the people has been too long deferred; it is time that their enemies were defeated."

What answer does the president (Robespierre) make? "Let the good citizens unite, let them make a final effort. The land of liberty, sullied by the presence of its enemies, is to be freed from it. To-

[1] In vain did the deputations of Jacobins, with Rousin and other members of the staff of the revolutionary army, insist on the formation of a revolutionary tribunal and guillotines. Carnot and the other members opposed it strongly; Robespierre alone was in favour of it.

day their death sentence is pronounced; to-morrow the aristocracy will be ended."

An immense crowd filled the hall and the steps. The petitioners carried boards with these inscriptions: "War to tyrants, aristocrats, and monopolists."

Such was the enthusiasm of the members of the Assembly when Moïse Bayle converted the petition of the commune into a motion to form a revolutionary army.

The venerable Dussaulx demands that the Champs Élysées and the Tuileries be cultivated for subsistence. Billaud proposes to decree that there shall be a revolutionary army, and that the minister of war shall forthwith present the mode of its organisation.[1]

The disturbance, the propositions, and the resolutions of this meeting are too terrible an epoch in the history of the Revolution; therefore I omit the principal circumstances. "It is time," said Billaud, "to decide the fate of the Revolution. I also moved these propositions, but they are insufficient. All our enemies must be arrested to-day. Let us show that the people are as enthusiastic as we are. Remember that the Convention has taken, with the members of the first Assembly, the pledge to give them the means of bearing into the departments the electric shock of patriotism and valorous ardour. The nation must rise everywhere. The people will be conquerors; they only await the impulse you will give them. The national movement ought to start

[1] Fortunately, Carnot was charged with this organisation, and he gave it at least a military form. We placed it under martial law at once, which prevented it committing those excesses the dictators and proposers hoped it would.

from here. I demand the immediate organisation of the revolutionary army. I demand that the administrations resume activity, and that any administrator who neglects the law be punished with death. If the revolutions be prolonged, it is because we take but half measures. Leave weak men to trouble about the results of the Revolution; we, who see on a grand scale what it can produce for the good of the people, will be seconded by them. Let us but crush the enemies of the Revolution, and from to-day the government takes action, the laws are executed, the fate of the people is assured, and liberty is preserved."

Bazire profited by this movement of enthusiasm to get the revolutionary government sanctioned by a solemn decree of which he always spoke in every motion. "I ask," said he, "that a preliminary proposition be made to all the revolutionary institutions. The Convention has decreed that France is in revolution. This decree was necessary to establish all the revolutionary institutions that circumstances demand; it should pass to all the citizens, that they may be penetrated by it and feel the necessity of these measures. However, this decree is not yet published. I ask that it be written to-day and sent by special messengers into all the provinces."

Billaud insists on the formation of revolutionary armies in all the departments. Léonard Bourdon wishes, besides, that the revolutionary army have in its train a tribunal empowered to punish criminals on the spot, and that the committee present to the meeting a bill on this revolutionary army, to be paid at the expense of the rich, and with this double object: first, to take food from the storehouses, where

it is locked up; secondly: to arrest the malevolent; and, finally, that it shall have in its train a tribunal charged to judge conspirators within twenty-four hours.

A vote on these propositions was loudly demanded, when Jean Bon Saint-André, who came from the Committee of Public Safety, where he had witnessed the solicitude which was occasioned by the adoption of such violent measures which had been improvised by a sort of popular riot, announced that the committee was preparing a report on the measures necessitated by the circumstances. "The committee is engaged," said he, "at this moment in meditating and developing them." (Groans.)

Drouet exclaimed that they should decree immediately. (Loud applause.)

However, Jean Bon Saint-André, though listened to with disfavour, continued: "We must commence by maturing and meditating such measures. The deliberation turns at this moment[1] on these two bases: first, the circulation of food; secondly, the measures against those who make famine a means of counteracting revolution. I beg the Convention not to precipitate its deliberation. The reporter will be here in an hour; the time is not very long."

[1] Part of the assembled citizens had entered the rooms of the Committee; it was a got-up affair to compel the Convention to decree the formation of a revolutionary army, with tribunals and accessories. The fieriest of them compelled us to consider the same measures that their friends were proposing at the bar of the Convention. Boiling like volcanoes, they demanded the execution of Brissot's followers and of Marie Antoinette, and the expulsion of all the soldiers in Paris. I made the report under the very eyes of my colleagues and the petitioners. Robespierre left his President's seat in the Assembly to see that the Committee did not lessen the terms of the motion.

"It would be very surprising," said Billaud, "if we amused ourselves with deliberating when we ought to be acting." (Loud cheers.)

"If I proposed to delay for a day," replied Jean Bon Saint-André, "you would be right in accusing us of slowness; but the report which I announce will be made in an hour. The best patriots of Paris are deliberating at this moment in the committee."

"We are in a fencing school," exclaimed Guiton; "we have no time for delays. The city of Paris, like Mount Etna, ought to vomit calcined aristocracy from its bosom. We must decree the sections permanent, and the barriers closed."

"We must first decree the measures proposed by the Commune of Paris," said Moïse Bayle.

Saint-André still vainly protested that they should await the report of the committee before deliberating.

The decision was taken. The committee had only to execute a decree, to await, and to obey the wishes of the Assembly.

Danton ascends the tribune. Redoubled applause prevents him from speaking for some time. Who then would dare not to show himself equal to those revolutionary principles? If I put these speeches of Danton and Robespierre in my Memoirs, it is because it is important to recall to the levity of the French the epoch in which we were all put in revolution; when, by whom, and for whom these great movements have been given, received, communicated, continued, exaggerated, disfigured, dishonoured, and afterwards violently proscribed. Not to wander, and not to be unjust, one must always go back to the source. People speak to-day against the revolutionary

government, after having applauded it; they proscribe the revolutionists after having imitated them. They accuse the Committee of Public Safety of having created the revolutionary movement; it is the orators of the Convention, with their barbarous energy, who have created and propagated it. I am accused of having aided and accelerated this movement; whilst I was always denounced as striving to moderate and cool it. *They wish to be free; they know not how to be just.*

But hear the father of the mob. What others had proposed, Danton orders. "I am of the same opinion," he exclaimed, "as several members, notably as Billaud-Varennes. (Cheers.) I think we ought to put to advantage the sublime energy of the people who surround us. I know that when the people present their wants, when they offer to march against their enemies, we ought to take no measures but those the people propose, for it is the national genius which has dictated them. I think it advantageous that the committee make its report, that it calculate and propose the means of execution; but I believe also that there is no inconvenience in decreeing at the same instant a revolutionary army. Let us, if possible, enlarge these measures.

"You have just proclaimed in the face of France that there is still a true, an active revolution. Very well, we must crown this revolution. Never be frightened at the movements the anti-revolutionists can make in Paris. No doubt they would wish to extinguish the fire of liberty in its most ardent hearth, but the immense mass of true patriots who have overthrown their enemies a thousand times still exist, and are ready to move. Know how to direct it; it will still baffle

and confound all these manœuvres. . . . A revolutionary army is not enough; be revolutionists yourselves. . . . Remember that working men who live by the sweat of their brow cannot go into the sections of which intrigue takes possession during the absence of the patriots. Order, then, two great assemblies of sections weekly, and let the men of the people who assist at these political assemblies have a just reward for the time they take from their work. (Cheers.)

"It is well to announce to our enemies that we wish to be completely and continually in action against them. You have voted thirty millions for the manufacture of arms. Vote for their manufacture until each citizen has a gun. I demand a vote of a hundred millions at least for arms. . . . But you must punish the enemies you hold and those whom you have to seize. The revolutionary tribunal must then be divided into a sufficient number of sections, that every day an aristocrat, a scoundrel, pay for his villainies with his head (Cheers). I ask, finally, that a report be made on the manner of increasing more and more the revolutionary tribunal. . . . Let the people see their enemies fall. . . . Honour will be yours, noble people. Join perseverance to greatness. You wish for freedom obstinately; you will acquire it; we will march with you; your enemies shall be confounded; you will be free." (Applause. The Assembly rose *en masse;* the enthusiasm seemed universal.)

All the proposals of Danton were voted. (Renewed Cheers.) No, never did a Roman tribune, an Athenian demagogue, any of the Gracchi obtain more brilliant success and pass such mobbish and revolutionary measures so promptly—the creation of a revolutionary

army paid by the rich; a revolutionary army in each department; an extraordinary assembly of the sections; payment of the citizens who are present at it; the manufacture of arms to the amount of a hundred millions, placed at the disposal of the Minister of War; to give stronger action to the revolutionary tribunal. It is surprising there did not issue from this volcano a lava that would consume the Republic. There was wanted but an ostensible leader for the execution of these extraordinary measures, and the most terrible dictatorship and despotism was seated on the ruins of the Republic under the sacred name of liberty and equality.

But what did I say? a leader: this leader was demanded by the commune of Paris in their petition to the assembly; and if Danton spoke so strongly at this meeting, it was that the instigator of the 31st of May wished to assure or extend his empire. Recall those words that the commune spoke by Chaumette's mouth at that very meeting: "But where is the strong hand which will vigorously turn this key of the granaries fatal to traitors? Where is the proud being, inaccessible to every kind of intrigue and corruption, who will tear up the book written with the blood of the people, and who will make of it the sentence of death on those who starve us? Where is the noble being who will crush those reptiles who corrupt whatever they touch, and whose venomous stings disturb our fellow-citizens, convert our political assemblies into arenas of gladiators, where every interest finds daily apologists and an army?"

The proposals of Danton, like the teeth of Cadmus, produced a number of others of the same kind. Billaud

demands that, in order to arrest the anti-revolutionists and the suspects on the spot, the Convention should repeal the finest and wisest of decrees, the one that forbade domiciliary visits during the night. But it was Gensonné who had passed this decree, destined to be part of the constitution; now, Gensonné was proscribed, and in revolutions the best thoughts of an outlaw are proscribed too: they are doing to-day what they did then. Billaud demands that the same measures of arrest of the suspects, and of the domiciliary visits even at night, should extend to all the communes of the Republic, and that they regard as a suspect every nobleman and priest who on receipt of the decree was not resident in his municipality.

Same Sitting—The dreadful definition of the word "Suspect" given by Bazire.

Bazire asks to explain the word "suspect." It was expected that he was going to develop ideas of legislation, to remove vague and arbitrary ideas. He presents but ideas of revolution, which increase the circle of suspects. "It was thought," said he, "that the word 'suspect' referred only to priests and nobles. Strange delusion! I have observations to make on that, and I ask that the definition be 'suspected people.' First, in the class hitherto noble, all the youths have emigrated; there remain but old men, women and children to manage the properties, and to send money to the others. Many priests have been transported; the stupor of the nobles equals their wickedness. These are not our most numerous and dangerous enemies. Why have you restricted

your measures to those two classes? You have had apostate howlers in the sections for a long time for the sectionary revolution; you have there waverers, you have had Brissotins, you still have hypocrites—and I ask you if all these were nobles?

"Amongst whom, then, do we find the second class of suspects? They are the shopkeepers, the great merchants, the stock-jobbers, the former lawyers, ushers, insolent valets, stewards, and men of business; men of private income, practitioners of trickery by instinct, profession, and education. (Cheers). All those are naturally greater enemies of liberty than the priests and nobles. It follows from our false manner of looking at men, that until the present the nobles have been pursued, and agitators and howlers left in the sections, who estrange the people and cause the evils of the false famine. It is necessary that all those be arrested who have shown themselves notably enemies of the Revolution, to commence by a preliminary operation which consists in purifying the revolutionary committees of the sections.[1] The general council of the commune must purify the committees, and the reconstituted committees must make lists of the suspects and of the disturbers who inflame the sections, and arrest the suspects. We do not want oratorical phrases against the enemies of the people:

[1] With this word "purify" the ambitious have destroyed all. Danton, Robespierre, and Marat spoke of purifying the Convention on the 31st of May; Bazire, Danton, and Robespierre on the 5th of September spoke of purifying the sections and committees, to leave only their tools; on the 3rd of Thermidor, Robespierre and Coutbon spoke of purifying the Convention again, and they wished to kill those members who resisted them, so that there might be no obstacle to their dictatorship.

we must seize and strangle them, and not play at abusing them."

Léonard Bourdon wished to apply these measures to the departments, and that the commissioners of the Convention render an account of what they have done for the purification of the administrations. In the heat of the proposals, the president was told to await the report of the committee before proceeding farther.

"But," said Billaud, "we need not pass measures relative to the revolutionary committees through the sieve of the committee. I ask that it receive an indemnity like that of the electors for the members of the committees." Decided.

The proposals of Bazire were also carried.

Men are afterwards astonished at the number of arbitrary arrests made, and at the influence of the general council of the Commune, to which the Convention had entrusted the arbitrary formation of the revolutionary committees, and that the creatures of the Commune obeyed the incarcerating impulses of the Héberts, Chaumettes, Dantons, and Robespierres; and they do not blush to attribute to the Committee of Public Safety the measures that were taken spontaneously by the Convention on the very motion of the dictators, or their lieutenants, in the absence, and without the participation, of the Committee of Public Safety.

After the general measures came the private passions. It would be astonishing that one should have spoken of arrests and revolutions without dedicating a word to Brissot, and to the other deputies arrested on the 2nd of June. Since the 31st of May this was the topic of the revolutionary motions, as has been

seen since the 12th of Germinal, the moment when the names of other members were uppermost.

During all this time the Committee of Public Safety was obstructed by petitioners. Robespierre, who had ceded the chair to Thuriot, had come to announce that the sections of Paris demanded the judgment of the Brissotins, which had been too long delayed. He persisted in what he said of Brissot and of Marie Antoinette in the report, although the committee wished to say nothing in the decree which I was going to carry to the Convention. Robespierre said the Mountain was threatened by the snares which Brissot was preparing in his prison, and that a plot was formed to save the Queen and the Brissotins, and to assassinate the deputies of the Left. When one had seen Robespierre a few times, one could form an idea of the cruel cowardice of the man, and of the empire the reports of conspiracy and public terror exercised on his tyrannical brain. Tyranny is ever cruel, cowardly, and fearful.

Same Sitting—Petition read to the Convention—Terror the order of the day.

Whilst I was writing my report, under the eyes of the committee, the forty-eight sections and the Jacobins were admitted to the bar of the Convention.

"Representatives of the people," said their spokesman, "the dangers of the fatherland are extreme; the remedies ought to be equally so. You have decreed that the French rise *en masse* to repel enemies from their territory; but these are not the most dangerous. The traitors who divide us at home are more so. Impunity emboldens them. The people are discouraged

at seeing the guilty escape the vengeance of the nation. The friends of freedom are indignant that the supporters of federalism[1] have not yet suffered for their offences. In the public places the republicans speak with indignation of the offences of Brissot. Be it remembered that this monster has been vomited out by England, in 1789, to disturb our revolution and hinder its march. We ask that he be judged like his accomplices. The people are indignant at seeing privileges in the midst of the Republic. Why should the Vergniauds, the Gensonnés, and other criminals, degraded by their treason from the dignity of representatives of the people, have a palace as their prison (the Luxembourg) while the *sans-culottes* groan in dungeons beneath the poniards of the federalists?

"It is time that equality should lay its scythe on all heads; it is time to frighten all conspirators. Ah! legislators, make terror the order of the day. Be in revolution, since the anti-revolution is plotted everywhere by our enemies. Let the sword of the law descend on all guilty heads. We demand that a revolutionary tribunal be established and divided into several sections, and that each have in its train a terrifying tribunal—the terrible instrument of the vengeance of the laws; that this army and these tribunals remain in operation until the land be purged of traitors, and until the death of the last conspirator.

"Before all, banish this haughty class, loaded with crimes, who still insolently occupy the first places in our armies, where, since the commencement of the

[1] The Jacobins proscribed their enemies under the name of federalists in 1793; they were themselves proscribed in 1795 under the name of terrorists. This is revolutionary justice!

war, they have only displayed treason. The nobles were always the irreconcilable enemies of equality and humanity. To deprive them of all power, to increase the hosts of our enemies, we ought to demand their imprisonment until peace be proclaimed. This race, athirst for blood, should see its own blood shed. The Manes of the accumulated victims of treason demand a burning vengeance, and the voice of the people imposes the law on you."

What was the answer of the president of the Convention? "Citizens, it is the people who have made the revolution; it belongs to you to assure prompt measures to save the fatherland. You demand the establishment of a revolutionary army; your wish is crowned. The Convention, attentive to everything which could intimidate and baffle foreign powers and their agents, has decreed that this army be immediately formed. Yes, courage and justice is the order of the day. All good citizens, instead of trembling, will bless the moment when the Convention takes measures to fix at last the fate of the revolution. All Frenchmen will bless the society to which you belong, and in the name of which, as in the name of the city of Paris, you come to solicit these imperative and definite measures. All the wicked will perish on the scaffold; the Convention has solemnly sworn it. It has already taken the means of giving greater activity to the revolutionary tribunal. To-morrow it will be occupied in increasing the number of the judges and jurors. The Convention applauds your patriotism." The deputations of the sections and of the Jacobin clubs filed into the halls at the noise of the applause.

It was usual in the popular movements that took place in Paris that the aristocracy should be always mixed with the people, watching for an opportunity to get possession of the movements, or seeking the means either of perverting them, or of turning them against the people, or, finally, of causing excess and horrors with which to accuse liberty afterwards. These tactics were very sagaciously executed in the movements of Prairial, Germinal, and Messidor, in the year III; but happily nothing succeeded against the imperishable republic. On the 5th of September these tactics were tried by three young petitioners, representing themselves as deputies of a popular society. They complained that the levy *en masse* was not made in its entirety, since the first class only were compelled to set out. "This distinction of the classes is as dangerous as unjust," said they. "We ask that the three classes, that is to say, that all the citizens, should be requisitioned to march at once."

Murmurs interrupted these young anti-revolutionists who had been sent to the bar by the aristocracy.

The president answered them: "The Convention will not permit spirited young citizens to be dishonoured by the spiritless." These words were applauded, and the petitioners had already fled, as if the enemy had pursued them.

The report of the Committee of Public Safety was not yet ready, although the meeting was nearing its end. Merlin of Douai proposed a sentence of death against those who bought or sold assignats, who quoted different prices in cash or in assignats, who spoke in discredit of assignats, who refused them as payment or who accepted them at a discount. Whilst

Merlin was proposing these Draconian measures, Robespierre came from the committee and took the chair. A deputation of the Unity section presented a forcible address against the nobles in the army, against stock-jobbing and monopoly, for the prompt judgment of the widow Capet, of Brissot, and the imprisoned deputies, for the revolutionary army, and the establishment of twelve itinerant tribunals, which should be authorised to judge on the spot without other forms than those that would appear necessary for their own conviction.[1] Such was the violence of the speeches and the exaggerated heat of the orators during this meeting of the 5th of September, that those who read it in these Memoirs will doubt it; such was the unhappy privilege of our burning and terrible revolution, that truth goes beyond probability.

Drouet added to the madness of the petitioners, and the wise legislator disappeared before the furious orator. "You have ordained," said he, "that suspects should be arrested. I wish that you would tell these guilty men that if liberty were in danger, you would massacre them pitilessly (murmurs); that you would only give up the land of liberty to tyrants covered with corpses. Make this solemn declaration that impure men will be responsible for the miseries of the State. I demand that the syndic reporter of the Commune of Paris, or every revolutionary committee, in declaring a man a suspect should

[1] These same Paris sections who created the terror afterwards accused the terrorists. They wanted a larger number of prisons, and then complain of their quantity. They asked for twelve itinerant tribunals judging on the spot, and then rise against the tyranny that they themselves have created. Oh, weather-vanes of the Revolution!

not need to give its motives. I demand that the representatives on missions in the departments use with the most extreme rigour the full power that has been given them to purify federalist, malevolent, or feeble administrations."

To the honour of the entire Convention, Thuriot went into the tribune and warned the Assembly against these criminal calculations and these ferocious propositions. "We are working for humanity," he exclaimed. "Far from us be the idea that France thirsts for blood; it only thirsts for justice. (Prolonged Cheers.) No event ought to be transmitted in the annals of the Revolution for which a praiseworthy motive can not be assigned." Thuriot refuted Drouet with feeling; and, at least, minds over-excited by the course of this meeting were a little disposed to receive less violent measures.

Same Meeting—My Report.

This was the moment on which I came to make the report of the Committee of Public Safety. Let those who wish to accuse its expression look at the stormy and volcanic course of the debates of this meeting during the five hours that preceded my report. Let those who wish to accuse its results reflect that before my report the Assembly had decreed measures such as the formation of a revolutionary army, the allocation of twenty pence for every man in a section, the arrest of the suspects, terror made the order of the day, the increase of the activity of the revolutionary tribunal, the purification of the revolutionary committees by the mob of Paris. I came then to make no law worse, to propose no new law. The

Committee of Public Safety, whose organ I was, was already accused of moderation, its slowness was complained of; deliberations were carried on without it, or without knowledge of its plans. I was then in this essential circumstance but the forced executioner, the passive and unwilling instrument of the wishes emanating from the bosom of the Convention, and coming from its own movement. Personally I sought to frighten our enemies at home by menaces which spared the pain of cruelty. I spoke thus:

"For several days everything has seemed to announce a movement in Paris; intercepted letters, whether for abroad or for the aristocrats at home, reveal the constant efforts their agents are making to keep up an incessant movement in what they call the great city. Well! they shall have this movement, but they shall have it organised and regulated by a revolutionary army, which will execute this grand motto of the Commune of Paris: 'Let us make terror the order of the day.' Thus in an instant the royalists, moderates, and anti-revolutionists who disturb you will disappear. The royalists wish for blood: they shall have the blood of the conspirators, of Brissot, and of Marie Antoinette. They wish to prepare a movement: they shall experience the effects of one. These are not acts of illegal vengeance, for the extraordinary tribunals are going to perform them.

"You will not be astonished at the means which we present to you, when you learn that from their prisons the criminals still conspire, and that they are the rallying points of our enemies. Brissot has said and published that, before his head falls, a part of the Convention will be no more, and

the Mountain will be annihilated. It is thus they try to check you by terror in your revolutionary march. The royalists wish to disturb the work of the Convention . . . . Conspirators, the Convention will disturb yours. They wish to destroy the Mountain . . . . the Mountain will crush them. To-morrow the revolutionary committee will present to you the means of organisation of a revolutionary army of six thousand men in Paris, with twelve hundred gunners.

"The royalists say they would like to cut the throats of Pache and the mayors. . . . Pache shall live to serve the people and to baffle their infamous manœuvres on the food-supply. I have seen him constantly occupied about the arrival of the food, which they are striving to retard and intercept. One fact will show the existence of the conspiracies you must deal with. Yesterday a man, known for his patriotism, was passing by the palace called Royal—a den of stock-jobbers. He heard six young *muscadins*—a name the haughty young nobles have given themselves, which will prove to posterity the existence in France, in the midst of the Revolution, of young persons without courage or fatherland—pronounce these words: 'All will go well, the women are chosen, and the *muscadins* have made up their minds.' Women are, then, their resource. Doubtless they can be led astray; but this sensitive and witty sex is not essentially the conquest of fanaticism; the genius of liberty is not foreign to it; it will never be the instrument of crime. As to the *muscadins*, it is easy to deprive them of the means of being dangerous.

"The royalists exclaim daily against the Republic one and indivisible . . . . and they wish to destroy

it. The royalists monopolise the food or prevent the markets . . . . and they accuse the Convention of it. They disturb the Stock Exchange, they depreciate the assignats, and blame the Convention for it. They restrict the circulation of food near Paris . . . . and declaim against the Convention, which takes measures daily to facilitate or accelerate its arrival. The royalists deliver up our ports to the English . . . . and they get traitors to say daily, or publish in the south, that the Convention wishes to deliver up the ports. The royalists make movements around Paris, they estrange the prosperous citizens from us, they borrow their name and costume . . . . and they calumniate the people and the Convention.

"What do we want to end such crimes and conspiracies? A revolutionary army to sweep away the conspirators, an army organised like the National Guard, that can assemble to-day and move to-morrow. We want an army to execute the measures of public safety the Convention decrees. We want an army, not for Paris only, but for wherever the movements of the anti-revolutionists are felt. For four years the aristocracy have been trying by gold and intrigue, false terrors and calumnies, to re-establish itself on the immense territory of this immense city, which has seen liberty re-born. For four years its soil has repulsed them, but the contra-revolutionists have made a girdle round Paris. They reassemble in the castles which pride and feudalism have raised. You can find there signs of rallying and of royalty; they alarm the peasants, they excite them to send petitions to the Convention on the food-supply, in spite of the abundance of their harvests. What time have they selected

to sow these terrors? exactly when the arrivals are most difficult and most rare. You have decreed a maximum demanded by the people; it is the moment on which they wish to prevent its execution.

"You have already taken several measures in this meeting; we shall restrict ourselves to proposing the levy of the revolutionary army created by you. We also propose a useful and ready means of banishing from Paris this enormous crowd of military men, who are absent from their posts, or who are never on active service. It is important that their municipalities should exercise surveillance over all those who are here by reason of suspension or destitution. I ought to tell you that whilst measures are undertaken here against the aristocrats, in the department of the Somme very good measures are undertaken against the English and the Austrians.

"But to form battalions is nothing, we must have good guides for the armies. They will lock up traitors, and others ready for treason or fallen under suspicion; I speak of the former nobles. For this class see what the committee has done (the Assembly can take stronger measures): it has drawn up a list of all the nobles who are in the army. When it is submitted to you, you can decide what seems suitable to you. For my part, I have always thought that when a democracy is established, when the people make a revolution for themselves, a thing never seen before, democrats alone should be admitted into the public offices. It is organising, not disorganising, to banish from the service—at least, from the military service—those whose habits and prejudices cause us to suspect their intentions.

"At the commencement of the Revolution, an armed force paid out of the national treasury was established at Paris. The business of the public force is to finish the revolution by the same means. We propose to reduce this army to six thousand men and twelve hundred gunners, whose patriotism is well known. The fate of the contra-revolutionists seems to be written, everything forebodes their end. The Minister of Justice has written to us that, at Dinan, Pitt's nephew has been found concealed in the Castle of Caminet, and put under arrest. We propose to have him transferred to Paris."

I brought forward two motions at the end of this report: the first on the revolutionary army already decreed by the Convention, the second on the departure of military men in Paris. They were adopted.

At the end of the meeting, on the motion of Billaud-Varennes, Clavière and Lebrun were sent to the revolutionary tribunal.

End of the Meeting of the 5th of September—Danton had too short a memory for a man who aspires to tyranny.

Such was this famous meeting whose aim was to justify, to complete the execrable days of the 31st of May and the 2nd of June, and to consolidate the dictatorship of Danton and Robespierre. It was the natural sequel of these days that the mob made the Convention sanction; thence arose the tyranny these two men never ceased to exercise in the name of the people and unknown to its representatives. We remember the complaints of Billaud on the non-execution of the decrees, and his motion to nominate

a private commission to watch their execution. It is not forgotten that Danton, when supporting this motion, converted it into another, with a view to introduce three new members into the Committee of Public Safety; this would raise the number from nine to twelve.[1] This proposal, on the demand of Danton, was returned to the committee. It is thus that the leaders at the Assembly exercised the initiative, and afterwards proposed to the committee the persons whom it ought to nominate to these recently created places.

The 6th of September—Nomination of Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois to the Committee of Public Safety—Granet, also nominated, resigns a short time afterwards.

On the 6th of September I was charged by the committee to present to the choice of the Convention three new members, the list of whom was given to me. My report was very brief. I said: "You have sent to your Committee of Public Safety a question twice discussed in this Assembly, viz., if it be not necessary to add to it three new members, who would be specially charged to watch over the executive. In fact, if there is anything deserving of surveillance, it is the executive, for all evil

[1] Men who wish to govern with phrases will find it impossible to prove that the Committee of Public Safety was ever a *decemvirate*, for, by the Decree of the 5th of April, 1793 it was made up of nine members, and on its renewal, on the 10th of July, 1793, it was still kept at nine. It was only on the 6th of September, by Danton's motion, that it was raised to twelve, at which number it remained until the 9th of Thermidor. Neither nine nor twelve are ten; but orators needed the phases—decemviral axe, crimes of the decemvirs, &c

comes from the want of execution. Your committee demands that citizens Billaud, Collot, and Granet be added." This demand is decreed.

Granet immediately resigned. Collot and Billaud were attached to the correspondence with the representatives of the people, and with the administrations of the departments. They were occupied with the general correspondence, which was a manner of watching the execution of the laws.

The 3rd of October, 1793.

Fatal Day—Rending of the National Assembly—Violation of the Freedom of Thought of the Legislator and of the Rights of the Representative of the People—Arrest of seventy-three Deputies.

Why should this time of solemn justice, rendered to the father of philosophy (Descartes), be the epoch of an atrocious injustice, exercised on the legislators of the Republic? By what fatality should such different days succeed one another? Oh! that it were possible to efface this horrible meeting of the 3rd of October with tears, where we see on the one side celebrated deputies, who ought to be representatives in the legislative body, sent as conspirators to the revolutionary tribunal; and on the other side, seventy-three representatives arrested because they had voted in favour of the liberty of the Convention, on the 31st of May and the 2nd of June! The latter was a day of mourning for the fatherland and of rending for the Convention; on that day was the national representation mutilated, the sacred principle of its integrity and moral inviolability violated; that day created every evil, divided the Convention still more into two parties, organised the system of factions, and scattered the

seeds of all the discord, proscription, and vengeance that is being exercised up to the moment I am writing.

What inquisitorial and horrifying display is in the Convention! The doors of the temple of the laws are shut; the spectators are not free, and cannot leave the galleries; deputies denounce deputies; representatives arrest representatives; the accused and detained are counted like cattle at the bar. No one is heard in his justification[1]; the principles of natural defence are disregarded; the explanations of the denounced are sent to the revolutionary tribunal. Assembled in confusion at the bar, they declare in vain that they have never conspired against the fatherland. The order of the day repels this justification, which could save their lives. The inertia of the minority of the Convention is regarded as a new plan of conspiracy.

"Those are the contra-revolutionists," said they, "who have signed protests when the Republic was afire."

One of the execrable authors of the 31st of May, the implacable enemy of representation, applauded as dictator this new proscription of seventy-three representatives. He dared to say: "The decree which has just been made honours the Convention for ever, and will transmit the names of its members to posterity; the Convention has for the moment satisfied national justice. I ask that the Convention leave things as they are till after the report of the committee; and, if there be still fresh culprits, they shall see if I

[1] Thus was established the awful rule of sending the arrested members to the revolutionary tribunal without listening to their defence.

am not the first to call the vengeance of the laws upon them."

For a moment some members, thirsting for blood, seemed to fear that the printing of the documents and of the report would delay the condemnation of those sentenced by accusation. Robespierre speaks to reassure them; and his remarks deserve being preserved in history, like those of Nero and Tiberius by Tacitus.

"You seem to fear that the printing may retard the carrying out of the case. Citizens, written proofs are the weakest. It is history that condemns them; it is public opinion which has struck the conspirators whom we have accused."

Thus spoke Robespierre, to destroy thirty-two representatives, in 1793. Thus spoke Legendre, Tallien, André Dumont, and Clauzel, to destroy me, in 1795. All tyrants are alike. When they have no crime to accuse their enemies of but the hatred they bear them, when they have no proofs to offer, they invoke the public opinion they have themselves caused by terror, they point to the history of the times which they have corrupted. O unjust justice of contemporaries! you were the same for Aristides and for Cicero, for Phocion and for Gracchus!

I was absent from the Meeting of the 3rd of October.

My presence at least did not defile this meeting, and my name is absent from the pages of history which narrate these events to posterity.[1] You who are at this moment in a majority in the Convention,

[1] I have had the patience to go through the whole file of the "Moniteur," and in no decree of accusation or arrest of deputies will you find my name.

will you charge me with my silence? Take care; I should with more reason charge you with yours when, on the 2nd of June, alone in my courage and love of country, I wished to save you by denouncing from the tribune the tyranny in arms in the Place du Carrousel, hired assassins violating your homes, and the ruffian Henriot demanding his victims. I will put against you my efforts on your behalf on the 31st of May, the 1st, 2nd, and 6th of June, when you were but a miserable, inert minority, reviled under the name of appellants, and accused under the name of faithless mandatories and conspirators. I defended you with all my power; you have accused me with all your fury. I neutralised the accusations directed against you *en masse;* you have awakened the threat of proscription a hundred times held out against me alone. Say on which side are justice and generosity —is it on yours or on mine?

Let us leave this digression. The meeting of the 3rd of October is one of the saddest of this time. On that day national representation received its most deadly blow. It was then said that circumstances demanded it. The ministers of the King always appealed to State reasons, the ministers of the people call upon the reasons of the Revolution. It is certain that in the midst of our national misfortunes the direction of public opinion was then such that no human power could prevent the crime of the 2nd of June or of the 3rd of October. One was the fatal consequence of the other. There are corresponding points in the events of the Revolution and in the conduct of tyrants. How many similarities will be noted in the course of these three years!

Report of Saint-Just on the Establishment of the Revolutionary Government—The 10th of October.

People always forget, or seem to forget, the disastrous circumstances of this epoch in which public misery exasperated good citizens, alarmed the nation (contra-revolutionists excepted), terrified the National Convention, occupied all the faculties of the Committee of Public Safety and of its executive council, finally gave a free course to all declamations against the enemies within our frontiers, to all passions between the different classes of citizens. This was the time when, for a word, for a sign, one was sent before the revolutionary tribunal. Then Albitte said in the tribune: "If it were permitted to a good citizen to be desirous of human blood, it would be that of General Brunet I should like to feast on. All the south, witness of his crimes, loudly demands vengeance. I ask that the monster be handed over to the revolutionary tribunal without delay." (Decreed.) This was the time when the Convention was receiving vehement petitions to retain the most Maratist representatives on their missions in the departments; the time when the revolutionary commission of the department of the Somme demanded that André Dumont should remain in that department, because there he was the Attila of all aristocrats and moderates.

This mental disposition did not escape the despotic perspicacity of Saint-Just. We did not then suspect his ambitions, and the secret intimacy existing between him and Robespierre. He spoke in the committee of a report he was preparing on the non-execution of the decrees, on the abuses to which

the victualling of the Republic gave place, on the slowness of the government, on finance, and on the food-supply in general, as well as on the victualling of Paris especially. Such was the plan of which he spoke, but in the execution of his project it was seen that he was not forgetting the three principal plans from which the abettors of anarchy and the partisans of dictatorship never deviated in their motions. Saint-Just cleverly got possession of the decree passed on Bazire's motion, which stated that the government should be revolutionary until peace was established. He never forgot the revolutionary army, the direction and use of which he hoped to regulate in concert with his friends. Still less did he forget to say that the constitution could not be brought to trial without danger.

I insist on these observations, because they show to what members of the committee certain revolutionary measures, certain excesses of opinion, certain deviations of national legislation, belong.

Behold the maxims Saint-Just gave the nation, the principles he made the representatives adopt, the political moral he wished to point; events will point out their results. Be it shame or honour, virtue or crime, we must give the title of revolutionist to him who has wished it, to him who has deserved it.

Saint-Just's Apophthegms, taken from his Report.

"The laws are revolutionary; those who execute them are not.

"The Republic will only be founded when the will of the sovereign represses the monarchical minority, and reigns over it by right of conquest.

"The enemies of the new order of things must

be spared in no way; liberty must conquer at any price.

"We must consolidate the Revolution, beat down federalism, comfort the people and provide them with plenty, strengthen the armies, and clear the State of the enemies who infest it. No prosperity can be hoped for whilst this last enemy of liberty breathes.

"You must punish traitors, and everyone passive in the Republic, or who does nothing for it. Whoever is opposed to it is an outlaw; whoever is an outlaw is an enemy.

"The maxims of peace and natural justice are good between the friends of liberty; but between the people and their enemies there is nothing in common save the sword. We must govern by the sword those who cannot be governed by justice. We must oppress the tyrants.

Administration and Government.

"The public administration is without energy; everybody has pillaged the State. The generals have made war against their armies. All the vices of the monarchy are leagued against the people and the Convention. A people have but one dangerous enemy, that is their government. You have few patriotic ministers. The generalship still is of the nature of the monarchy. We must identify the warriors with the people and the country. Intriguers are always in the administration and government. Ministers avow that they find but inertia and carelessness outside their first or second subordinate. In vain you make laws, in vain the Committee of Public Safety and some ministers assist you—all conspire against

them and us. The hospital agents of the Republic furnished flour to the rebels of the Vendée for six months. The rich support this war. You pursue the monopolists; you cannot pursue those who buy apparently for the army.

FINANCE—COMMERCE—TAXES—REQUISITIONS.

"The dissipation of the public treasure has contributed to the rise of provisions and to the success of conspiracies.

"We must load the rich with taxes, and establish a tribunal to compel those who controlled the public money for four years to give an account of their fortunes. We must impoverish the enemies of the people, that they may not enter into competition with them. The bread given by the rich is gall; it compromises liberty. Bread belongs to the people by right in a wisely ruled State.

"Taxes are rendered necessary by our circumstances. When commodities are taxed so that they are a third, a fourth, or a half dearer than they were before, we must not only not make issues of assignats which enrich the wealthy, on the contrary, we must withdraw from circulation a third, fourth, or half of the specie. We must diminish excessive incomes, tax the rich, and examine the taxable. In a Republic there is no consideration that should prevail over the common good. It is right that the people should rule in their turn over their oppressors, and that sweat should wash haughtiness from their foreheads. Your committee[1] had the idea of employing men justly

[1] The Committee, far from having this idea, which is worthy of Louis XI, several times rejected Saint-Just's plan of employing

suspected to mend the roads, to dig the Saint-Quentin and Orleans canals, to transport ship timber, and to clear the rivers. Our enemies have taken advantage of the maximum law for them; commissioners purchase with guineas for the army of the Duke of York. We must submit the requisitions to a *visa*, to recognise ill-intentioned agents.

THE CONSTITUTION.

"The Constitution cannot be established in the state the Republic now is; it would sacrifice itself; it would become the guarantee of crimes against its liberty, because it would lack the violence necessary to repress them.

REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT.

"The present government is also too embarrassed; you are too far from the crimes. The sword of the laws must reach quickly everywhere, and everywhere your arm must be present to prevent crime. The revolutionary laws cannot be carried out if the government is not constituted in a revolutionary manner. Every injustice towards the citizens, every betrayal, every act of indifference towards the fatherland, all supineness, ought to be severely repressed. We must connect the punishment and the crime. We must supply Paris as if it were in a state of siege, until peace be proclaimed. You ought to fill all with activity, and to rally the armies to the people and to the National Convention. The representatives of

prisoners on public works. "The prisoners," we said, "are hostages and not criminals; they have been arrested for the general safety and not for crimes." His was the hand that killed the prisoners, just as Louis XI killed four thousand nobles. Why, then, accuse others of his deed?

the people in the armies ought to be the fathers and friends of the soldier, who ought to find them day and night ready to hear him. They ought to sleep in the tent and in the camp. Those who make revolutions, those who wish to do good, ought to sleep only in the tomb.

ARMIES.

"Up to the present we lack institutions and military laws conformable to the system of the republic which is being founded. Whatever is not new in a time of innovation is pernicious. The military art of the monarchy is no longer of any use; we must have a great and powerful institution. Amongst the Greeks the phalanx conquered other troops, at Rome the legion conquered the phalanx; it was a veritable military constitution. The administration of the army is full of thieves; all despise it. The government ought not to be revolutionary against the aristocracy only; it ought to be so against those who shirk being soldiers, and deprave the army by their insolence too.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT—PROJECTS OF ITS ENEMIES.

"A new government is established with difficulty, and it is with difficulty that it forms its plans and its maxims. It is long without decided resolutions. Liberty has its infancy. One dare not govern with vigour nor weakness, because liberty comes by salutary anarchy, and slavery returns with absolute order.

"However, the enemy redouble their efforts and activity. They do not make war with the hope of conquering us by arms, but they do so to weaken the government and to prevent its establishment; they do so to shed the blood of the defenders of

liberty and diminish their number, that after the death of all the enthusiasts they may cause the cowards who await them to capitulate. A hundred thousand patriots have perished in a year: a terrible loss to liberty, as our enemies have lost but slaves. Epidemics and wars fortify the authority of kings. The government ought to make it impossible for the enemies of liberty to do injury in proportion as serviceable people perish. We must make war with prudence, and spare republican blood, for all wish to spill it: Europe thirsts for it. You have a hundred thousand men in the tomb who no longer defend liberty.

"Can officials have replaced monarchic institutions? The demon of writing makes war on us, and there is no government. The public service, as it is, is but a trade. Finally, everything has contributed to the miseries of the people and the general want: aristocracy, avarice, inertia, thievery, and a bad method. We must then completely rectify the government to stop the impulses our enemies are giving it towards tyranny. When all abuses are corrected, the correction of every evil will lead to good; we shall see abundance re-appear of its own accord."

A Revolutionary Government, till peace be established, is decreed by the National Convention on Saint-Just's report and the preceding motion of Bazire.

After the report the Convention decrees:

1. The provisional government of France is to be revolutionary till peace be declared.

2. The executive provisional council, the ministers, the generals, the constituted bodies, are placed under the surveillance of the Committee of Public Safety.

3. Every measure that is decreed ought to be taken by the executive council under the authority of the Committee of Public Safety, which will render an account of it to the Convention.

4. The revolutionary laws should be quickly executed. The government will immediately correspond with the districts for the measures of public safety.

5. The generals-in-chief will be nominated by the Convention on the recommendation of the Committee of Public Safety.

6. The inertia of the government being the cause of the reverses, the delay in the execution of the laws and of the measures of public safety shall be fixed; if this be exceeded, it shall be punished as an attempt on liberty.

Articles 7, 8, 9 and 10 relate to the food-supply and the modes of requisition.

By Article 11 Paris is to be supplied with provisions for a year.

Article 12. The direction and employment of the revolutionary army shall be always regulated to repress the contra-revolutionists. The committee will bring forward a plan.

Article 13. The executive council shall send garrisons into the towns, where contra-revolutionary movements take place. The garrisons shall be paid and maintained by the rich of the towns until peace be concluded.

Last Article. A tribunal and jury of taxing shall be created, nominated by the Convention. The tribunal will be charged to pursue all those who have managed the public money since the revolution, and demand an account of their fortunes. The Committee of Legislation shall organise this tribunal.

My Political Observations on the Methods of the Leaders of the 31st of May, etc.

The establishment of the revolutionary government was a fifth landmark placed by the authors of the system of organised anarchy. Through some great truths and very plain principles one sees, in the political events of this epoch, the rapid and terrible march of the ambitious towards dictatorship.

First landmark.—The triumvirate (Marat, Danton, and Robespierre) caused the events of the 31st of May, which violated the rights of the people and the dignity of national representation. This day was as brutal and violent as its authors.

Second landmark.—Danton and Robespierre wished to get the *coup d'état* of the 31st of May and the 2nd of June sanctioned at the time of the acceptance of the constitution at the end of August. Eight thousand deputies of the electoral colleges tacitly approved of these days, and tacitly demanded severe measures against the conspirators, and the arrest of the suspects. This epoch was terrible as to public misfor-

tunes, and imposing as to the anger and wish of the people. Danton called it "the beginning of the Terror."

Third landmark.—On the 5th of September the Terror arrives. The sections demanded prisons; the Jacobins and the sections wished to make terror the order of the day; Danton wished for revolutionary armies; the Jacobins and the sections wished for the exile of the deputies who had been illegally arrested on the 2nd of June; Robespierre wished it also. This day was tumultuous and anarchic, as the infernal genius of the two deputies who inspired it.

Fourth landmark.—The 3rd of October showed a new violation of the national representation. This violation originated from the same system as that of the 31st of May; it was its result, its complement; the same men inspired it. The Committee of General Surety was its instrument the same day, as the Committee of Legislation had been its instrument some days previously in proposing the law of the 17th of September about the suspects. This day was as sad and mournful as the decrees which it saw adopted.

Fifth landmark.—Bazire had decreed that France was in revolution till peace was concluded. This opinion was not barren in the hands of the authors of the 31st of May. "We must consecrate anarchy and our despotism," said they, "under the new and imposing title of 'revolutionary government' until peace be made," and immediately, on the 10th of October, Saint-Just employed his talents in legalising, developing, and getting the Convention to adopt this idea.

The revolutionary government once decreed, I

believe, with the majority of the Assembly, that it was only to assure prompt and severe execution of the laws; but the fathers of the 31st of May only saw in it the sanction of their revolutionary despotism. They acted in consequence, and tyranny was organised under the colours of patriotism; oppression sprang from the laws which were made to destroy it, and a new triumvirate was formed and took possession of the decrees to extend its domination everywhere. The performances of the 10th of October were astute and hypocritical, just like those who were to collect its poisoned fruit.

A general and irresistible impulse was given to all minds. Everything was revolutionary: costume, manners, language, societies, clubs, laws, arrests, government, committees, theatres, even the expression of the face. Everything seemed severe or frightened; all were either ardent revolutionists or depressed spectators. The people alone enjoyed respectable calm. They saw their oppressors punished or paralysed; they felt neither insult nor contempt. But several functionaries were insolent, cruel, despotic, brutal, prevaricators whilst invoking virtue, persecutors whilst invoking the laws, and vindictive whilst speaking of justice.

That was the result of the revolutions.

The 29th of October—Increase of Power for the Committee of Public Safety, provoked by Gossuin and Merlin of Douai.

On the 12th of September Danton decreed that the Committee of Public Safety should nominate the members of all the committees of the Convention. As if this usurpation of power did not suffice for those

who sought to make the Committee odious by its power or by the abuses inseparable from it, Gossuin tried to increase the power of the Committee still more. "Never," said he, "had the Republic such need of the work of its children, and, above all, of the representatives of the people; yet the committees are sometimes deserted. I propose that deputies, who are members of a committee, and who are absent from it for eight days be replaced by the Committee of Public Safety." Merlin of Douai adds, by way of amendment, that the names of the deputies so replaced be sent to the departments. These proposals were adopted.[1]

The same day a deputation of Jacobins came to the bar, demanding a law to authorise the jurors of the extraordinary tribunals to order the cessation of the pleadings when they have heard sufficient evidence. The petitioners also complained that the thirty-two deputies were not yet judged, and that their victims are sacrificed, whilst their own sentence is deferred. Thus we see at several epochs the triumphant faction astonished and complaining to the Convention because the tribunals did not deliver to it quickly enough the victims whom it had sent to them. Thus, after the constitution of 1795, which was accepted almost unanimously by the French people in the month of Fructidor, year III, we saw the villain Fréron, who had the art of escaping through all the purifications of the national representation, astonished, in the meeting of the second completory day, because Barère was not yet judged or transported. Every good republican,

[1] The enemies of the Committee are the very men who tried to exaggerate its power.

every faithful representative, ought to be much more astonished and complain much more at seeing Fréron seated in the National Assembly, this lieutenant of Danton, this anarchist, this slave of powerful Robespierre, this disciple of the sanguinary Marat, this shameless terrorist of the south, this great revolutionist [1] of the army of Italy, this destroyer of Toulon, the man who had eight hundred men shot without a trial, this scourge of Marseilles, this atrocious persecutor of the victims of the 31st of May[2]. Yes, every good republican, every faithful representative ought to be astonished at seeing in the midst of the avengers of the 31st of May this Fréron, who celebrated a civic feast on the death of the twenty-two victims of the 31st of May, and who, in his cannibal enthusiasm, wrote to Hérault de Séchelles: "These buggers of Girondins have at last danced the Carmagnole!" Yes, every patriot ought to complain that the defamer of the representatives, the reviler of the National Convention, the leader of the youth with green cravats, and the trumpeter of the royalist army should be still in the bosom of the first assembly in the world. I, above all, complain that this monster, the most cruel enemy of the patriots, is not yet accused and transported, not to Madagascar, where

[1] Fréron proposed to have Brissot and his accomplices shot instead of trying them. He demanded their instant execution, "For if we do not kill them, they will kill us." In the same way last winter, in advocating my immediate execution, he said: "Kill them, or they will kill you." This is the language of this model of justice and gentleness!

[2] In the Department of the Var, Fréron put a price on the head of Despinassy, the deputy who had been accused, and burnt his retreat in a forest near Toulon.

the people are too mild and pure for his manners, but to the deserts of Africa, where he will find his equals.

Final Note.

Now[1] the fatal hour of the most arbitrary transportation sounds a second time for me at the villainous and royalist voice of André Dumont, Legendre, Sieyès and Fréron, whom I expect to be soon known and unmasked. History has well avenged other crimes. Contemporaries are never just; posterity is just always. Wherever I go, into whatever lands injustice and tyranny transport me, whether to the rocks of Africa or to the coasts of Madagascar, everywhere my wishes shall be for the Republic and its prosperity.

I have no regret but that of afflicting my family with my miseries, one of the most honourable and patriotic in France.

I am equally afflicted at not being able to continue this work of my civic justification. I took it very much to heart. But the chagrin of being banished from my fatherland and the pains of detention have enfeebled my health, and almost destroyed my sight. Ah! when shall I rest where villains and calumniators are powerless? When shall the grave be between envy and me? between the Frérons, Dumonts, Sieyès, Legendres, and the unhappy object of their hatred? . . . Long live France! Long live liberty!

[1] The account from which we have quoted several scattered fragments stops with the events of the end of October, 1793. Barère had still several events to relate, amongst others his first sentence; but towards the beginning of November, 1795, shortly after the 13th Vendémiaire, he found himself compelled to stop this justification.

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